

OBSERVATIONS

UPON

Lord ORRERY's Remarks

ON THE

LIFE and *WRITINGS*

OF

Dr. JONATHAN SWIFT.

CONTAINING

Several singular ANECDOTES relating to the
Character and Conduct of that great Genius,
and the most deservedly celebrated STELLA.

In a Series of LETTERS to his Lordship.

To which are added,

TWO ORIGINAL PIECES of the same author
(excellent in their kind) never before publish'd.

L O N D O N,

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in *Catherine-street* in the *Strand*.

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T H E
P R E F A C E.

TH E various, evil, and ignorant accounts that have gone out into the world of Doctor SWIFT, or what is equally injurious (tho' neither ignorant nor ill-intended) the very mistaken and erroneous accounts that have been published of him, made it necessary, in the judgment of his friends, to have his character set out in a truer, and a fuller, and, at the same time, an equal and unflattering light; which is the sincere purpose and aim of the author of

P R E F A C E.

these Letters, fully confiding in the generosity of the noble author of the Remarks, that his candour will give him more delight in finding his friend cleared from many calumnies thrown upon him, than the corruptions of others can give them in imagining their own faults and follies countenanced and even flattered by his failures. These Letters those friends hope, will, for that reason, be acceptable to all the lovers of truth and justice; to whom they are humbly submitted, and dedicated, by their faithful friend, and admirer,

J. R.

T H E



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SOME
OBSERVATION
UPON
Lord ORRERY's Remarks
ON THE
LIFE *and* WRITINGS
OF
DR. JONATHAN SWIFT.

LETTER I.

MY LORD,

I SIT down, at the earnest request of some persons of consequence, to whom I can refuse nothing, not to censure, or in any degree to disparage, your judicious, and (in many respects) masterly remarks upon the life and writings of J. S : but

B

to

to vindicate him from some misrepresentations which, I am satisfied, have been made to you, and to the world, of him.

My Lord, if I am rightly informed, (and I should be glad to believe I am not) you had your information (in the main) from some persons, who called themselves his friends: and should, indeed, have been truly so, from the impulse of the lowest degree of gratitude. O, my Lord, the return of nominal friendship for real, is one of those cruel calamities, which embitter life: and too often, tincture and torment the mind with suspicion and distrust. And yet, there is a greater evil, even than this under the sun: and that is, friendship made the mask of malignity, and an unbridled spirit of scandal. And I am well assured, that the Dean has been heard to say of one of these, *This person does nothing but tell me lies, from Monday morning, to Saturday night.* And yet, one would think, such spirits should be content to tell lies to him, *not of him.* But the

the truth is, the tongue of calumny is *an unruly evil*, which knows not where to stop, nor whom to spare. Surely it must be of men of this character, that Solomon cries out, *Any wounds, but the wounds of a friend.*

I have been told, that the purpose of these people was, by all the evil arts of insinuation and untruth, to banish the Dean's best friends from about him, and make a monopoly of him to themselves. And they in a great measure effected it : for what ends, they best know.

You, my Lord, who were his real friend, and always honoured him in so distinguished a manner, will, I am sure, rejoice to have his character cleared up, where it can, from every misrepresentation that clouds it.

You begin, by telling us, Letter 1. p. 4. *that he was a mixture of avarice and generosity; the former was frequently prevalent;*

the latter seldom appeared, unless excited by compassion.

The first part of this character, is as great a singularity, as ever distinguished SWIFT from other men: and yet, my Lord, the observation is just; and you yourself lay the best foundation for accounting for it, by telling us, in the same page, that *he was in the decline of life when you knew him*; a period, in which avarice is found by long observation and experience, to prevail more or less, in the minds of the best men. His true character, prior to this period, was, a mixture of a regular, exact, and well-judged oeconomy and frugality, with a very distinguished generosity. And you well know, my Lord, that the true nature and character of men and things is to be judged of, by their state of perfection, not their decays. As true constitutional habits of bodies, are to be judged of from the state of their health, not their ensuing infirmities.

Give

Give me leave to add, that SWIFT, in the vigour of life, was not only an useful example of oeconomy in his own conduct, but also a great encourager and successful recommender of it to others. I have often heard one of his friends declare, that he thought himself inexpressibly obliged to him, for a friendly reproof and admonition upon this head. It was to this purpose, *bark-ye, Sir, (said he) I hear that you have a great many poor relations, and because that you are a senior fellow, they all expect to be senior-fellows too. I am far from discouraging you, in any reasonable kindness to your friends: but, let me tell you, too much may hurt them more than too little. My advice is this: Mend each of them in his present situation, as much as you can conveniently; but never take one of them out of it.*

But to return to your Lordship's character of him.

I have heard that he himself was early sensible of this encroachment of avarice

upon him, and used to give this instance of it: He had resolved, he said, that, as soon as he had raised the Deanery 30*l.* a year, he would then allow himself a helper in the stable,* and a wax-light to read by. He then added. It is now some years, since I raised it to that value, but no helper, nor wax-light have I, to this day.

I believe, my Lord, it will be found a true and sure observation, that when men can vaunt their vices or weaknesses of any kind, or turn them into a jest, they never amend them.

And yet it is most certain, that SWIFT's avarice never carried him into any of these evils or extremes, with which that vice is charged. On the contrary, I verily think, that by a turn of mind peculiar to himself, he drew good from that evil; as will soon be seen.

* He always kept three horses, and but one groom.

Your

Your next observation is, *His generosity seldom appeared, unless excited by compassion.*

Now, my Lord, if by compassion, you mean, that sensibility of nature, which makes us feel for others, and urges us, by relieving their distresses, to relieve our own ; by all that ever I could learn of SWIFT, he had as little of this sort of compassion as any man living ; and therefore his generosity had perhaps more merit in it, than that of any other man I ever knew : and it is certain, he has been frequently known to give five or ten pounds to charity, with more ease, than many richer men, under equal engagements with him, could be prevailed upon to give so many shillings : and this I think is the most shining and truly distinguished part of his character, (as a social man and christian) that he laid himself out to do more charities, in a greater variety of ways, and with a better judging discernment, than per-

haps any other man of his fortune in the world.

Give me leave to mention one thing of this kind. I never saw Poor so carefully and conscientiously attended to in my life, as those of his cathedral: they were badged, and never begged out of their district: and they always appeared with a very distinguished decency and cleanliness: and after some time, partly by collecting charities, but more by contributing, he got a little alms-house built, and furnished, for a few of the most ancient and orderly widows, in one of the closes of his cathedral, where they lived with a decency and cleanliness, equal to that of the best *English* Poor, which he took care to keep up, by frequent visits to them in person.

But this spirit of charity stopped not here: It is well known, that he was the author of a scheme, for the badging the poor of the whole city of *Dublin* (and the kingdom in consequence); the wisest, the best

best judged, the most practicable, and the most christian scheme, for relieving all those who were proper objects of charity. And at the same time, banishing vagrant beggary from the earth, with all its attendant abominations! a scheme, for delivering his country from a pest, for which he much better deserved to have a statue erected to him, than HYPOCRATES did, for relieving his, under the plague of *Athens*.

There was no such thing as a vagrant, or unbadged beggar seen about his cathedral. Not only the servants of his church, but his own poor also, were obliged to drive them away at their peril: they knew they could not suffer any such to appear, but at the hazard of their employments and badges. This he took (as I now observed) to be the most effectual method of banishing vagrant beggary, and at the same time, relieving real distress. And I am satisfied, that he had this also in view, in walking the streets so constantly as he did:

did : this gave him an opportunity of examining into the condition of every poor person he met. Which he did, with so well-practised a sagacity, as could seldom be imposed upon. And every man that follows his example, will soon find, that this practice will lead him into the exercise of more charity, than is possible to be practised in carriages of any kind ; all which hurries you beyond the object you would relieve, before you can possibly consider his case. Not to insist how much men are checked in purposes of this kind, by the false fear of being suspected of affectation and hypocrisy, in stopping a coach or a chair, to effect such purposes.

But to return.

There is such a mastery of style, humour, wit, and good sense in SWIFT's little discourse about badging the poor, as must make it at once both delightful and instructive, to men of the best abilities and knowledge of the world.

The

The reader, of parts and taste, will, I am sure, be much obliged to me for adorning these observations with one paragraph from it.

“ As I am personally acquainted with a
 “ great number of street-beggars, I find
 “ some weak attempts have been made in
 “ one or two parishes, to promote the
 “ wearing of badges: and my first question
 “ to those who ask an alms, is, Where
 “ is their badge? I have, in several years,
 “ met with about a dozen, who were
 “ ready to produce them. Some out of
 “ their pockets, others from under their
 “ coats, and two or three on their shoul-
 “ ders, only covered with a sort of capes,
 “ which they could lift up, or let down
 “ upon occasion. They are too lazy to
 “ work; they are not afraid to steal, nor
 “ ashamed to beg; and yet are too proud
 “ to be seen with a badge, as many of
 “ them have confessed to me, and not a
 “ few in very injurious terms: particu-
 “ larly

" larly the females. They all look upon
 " such an obligation as an high indignity
 " done to their office. I appeal to all in-
 " different people, whether such wretches
 " deserve to be relieved. As to myself, I
 " must confess this absurd insolence hath
 " so affected me, that for several years
 " past, I have not disposed of one single
 " farthing to a street-beggar ; nor intend
 " to do so, till I see a better regulation :
 " and I have endeavoured to persuade all
 " my brother-walkers † to follow my
 " example, which most of them assure me
 " they do. For if beggary be not able to
 " beat out pride, it cannot deserve cha-
 " rity. However, as to persons in coaches
 " and chairs, they bear but little of the
 " persecutions we suffer, and are willing
 " to leave it entirely upon us."

This also may, I think, be numbered
 among SWIFT's singularities ; That he
 was (as I before observed) early sensible
 of

† Of which the author of these observations had
 the honour to be one.

of his propensity to avarice, and therefore diligently laid himself out, to cheat it by charity, in every way that he could devise.

If he walked an hour or two on any occasion, instead of taking a coach, or a chair, he then cried out, that he had earned a shilling or eighteen-pence, &c. and had a right to do what he pleased with it. And that constantly went to the account of charity. And I am well satisfied, that the same principle governed him in many other instances. And to enable him to gratify this disposition, as occasions offered, he never went abroad without a pocket full of all sorts of coins, from a three-penny piece to a crown, which he collected with so much care, that he never was without a considerable fund of all the known kinds of current coins.

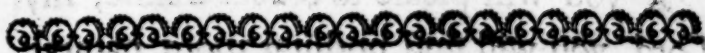
Had your Lordship been as well acquainted with his conduct in this instance, as I apprehend your informers were, I am
satis-

satisfied you would have found much more to admire than to censure, even in his infirmities. As I doubt not but you will feel a sincere satisfaction in being set right in these points, *by,*

MY LORD,

Your most humble, &c.

LET-



L E T T E R II.

MY LORD,

I BEG leave to inform you and the public, once for all, that my purpose is, to convey these epistolary observations, without any preluding or concluding apologies. And therefore I proceed to consider your next remark on SWIFT, which stands thus, p. 5.

He was open to adulation, and could not, or would not, distinguish between low flattery and just applause.

Here, my Lord, I must take the liberty to tell you, I totally differ from you in this part of SWIFT's character; insomuch that I verily think, he might have said with RAMSAY'S CYRUS, *I hated flattery, but was not insensible to delicate praise.*

If

If you will please to reflect a little, my Lord, you will find nothing more natural, than to apprehend, that a man, who himself had so much delicacy in praising, must be shocked at any attempts of that kind, which degenerated into gross flattery. The contrary to this, were as unnatural, as that a man, who had confessedly a fine taste, should yet not be able to distinguish between sparkling *Champaigne*, and flying Small Beer sweeten'd with Sugar Plumbs. Or if he could, would yet swallow down the latter with equal relish : tho' the ill effects were evident and immediate. A bad digestion, and an unsalutary swelling.

It is well known, that SWIFT was a great master of that kind of praise, which, by carrying the appearance of abuse, took off every thing that was surfeiting, or offensive to the nicest palate, in that kind of food : for praise, my Lord, is a food, the food of virtue. SWIFT well knew (as your Lordship well doth) that the love of praise is one of the noblest instincts, with
which

which God has endowed the human heart: as being one great incitement to every valuable excellence! and therefore, great care should be taken in indulging this noble instinct, not to surfeit, or turn the food into poison. For as praise is, in truth, the food of virtue, flattery is as truly the poison of praise.

I think little doubt can be made, that SWIFT himself most esteemed those good qualities, with which he endowed VAN-ESSA: among which are the following.

*All humble worth she strove to raise,
Would not be prais'd, yet lov'd to praise.*

Some of the gentlest verses that ever I saw of SWIFT's, were written upon this subject, to a friend (who won't allow me to name him) on occasion of a compliment paid to him in his own irony. I heartily wish I could gratify myself, and your Lordship, in publishing them: which indeed I cannot. For I am assured, the

C

per-

person they were addressed to, burnt the original in a fit of mortification : and kept no copy. However, the friendly spirit and affection with which they were written, will, I think, sufficiently appear from the two first, and a few of the following, and only lines I can remember :

*To you whose virtues I must own,
With shame I have too lately known ;*

*Oh why did fate perverse and blind,
Place you in life so far behind ?
Or, what I should repine at more,
Place me in life so far before ?*

The truth is, SWIFT kept every friend, and I believe every man living that he conversed with, in some degree of awe : and no man that ever I knew of, if he were so disposed, would yet dare to flatter him. Your Lordship indeed, who *beheld him in all humours and dispositions, and formed various speculations, from the several weaknesses: to which you observed him liable, p.4.* might have seen him in some weak unguarded mo-

moment, which escaped other eyes: or might have seen the poison administered with more success, from the advantage of better guiding to the pills, or more dexterity and address in the conveyance. For my own part, my Lord, from all that I could observe of SWIFT, he was more open to honest admonition, than low adulation. But as no man could, or dared attempt any thing of this kind authoritatively, we may be assured nothing of that kind could be admitted, without a previously established opinion of the integrity and friendship of the adviser.

One or two instances will, I think, be sufficient to support this assertion. The first is this, which he himself was often wont to mention: that in a poem of not two hundred lines (*Baucis and Philemon*) Mr. *Addison* made him blot out fourscore, add fourscore, and alter fourscore. The next is this: it was customary with SWIFT's friends to make him some little annual presents upon his birth-day: either verses,

or (according to his own definition of a present) *some things* of no great value, *that could not be bought*. In compliance with this custom, Dr. DELANY, very early after his admittance into some degree of intimacy with the Dean, sent him the following verses upon that occasion.

*How long with faith, shall ev'ry virtue
fail ?*

How long shall infidelity prevail ?

How long insult the gospels glorious light !

Stare in the face of day, yet swear 'tis night !

(True emblem of that vain pretender's pride

Whose wisdom whiteness to the snow denied)

*How long shall miscreants mock at sacred
writ !*

And, lost to reason, vaunt the aid of wit !

Great genius rise, retort the ridicule :

And scoff to just contempt, the scorning fool.

Employ thy talents right, be timely wise :

*The flame that falls from heav'n, to heav'n
should rise !*

Will the wise artist his whole skill employ,

To polish pebbles, to set off a toy !

When

*When the rich diamond waits, his master-
bands,*

When profit urges, and his king commands!

The gain is mighty, and the task is hard:

A crown of glory is the sure reward!

Not such frail crowns as mortals boast below,

*But such as saints shall wear, and God be-
stow!*

*So may I live, rais'd from this wretched
earth,*

To celebrate thy glorious second birth!

A question might, and hath been put, whether this compliment would not have concluded better without the two last lines? I own, I think it would have concluded well enough without them. But I have heard it remarked, as one of the truest tests of good writing, either in prose or verse, *when*, to a period properly concluded, something is properly and pertinently superadded, which the reader was not led to expect: whether this be the case in the point before us, he will best judge for himself. An instance from one

of SWIFT's birth-day odes to STELLA, will best explain the justice of this observation.

The thought turns upon STELLA's size, and years being doubled, since his first acquaintance with her; he then adds,

*O would it please the Gods to split,
Thy beauty, size, and years, and wit.
No age could furnish out a pair,
Of nymphs, so graceful, wise and fair!
With half the lustre of your eyes,
With half your wit, your years and size!*

ANACREON (and I might add HORACE) would have been contented to stop here: and would have gained to himself sufficient applause, from the wit, elegance and simplicity of this poem, carried no further: but how much must the *English* reader be delighted above the *Grecian*, when he finds SWIFT concluding in the following manner.

*And then, before it grew too late,
How should I beg of gentle fate,*

(That

*(That either nymph might have her swain)
To split my worship too in twain.]*

But to return to the point of SWIFT'S enduring admonition.

You will naturally ask, What was the consequence of this monition, from Dr. DELANY? It was this, my Lord. He fetched a deep sigh, and said, it was *too late*. And looked as if he were revolving those fine lamenting lines of WALLER ;

*Oh that my youth had thus employ'd my
pen,*

Or that I now could write as well as then.

But, however, he was so far from being offended, that he took all occasions from that day, to distinguish Dr. DELANY by the appellation of *friend*. One of these was in a poem, which I cannot recollect, and don't find published in his works : wherein when he had quoted that compliment of VIRGIL'S to GALLUS, *neget quis carmina Gallo*, he applies it thus :

*Here, by the way, by GALLUS mean I,
Not SHERIDAN, but friend DELANY.*

The other is in these lines to STELLA,
on her birth-day, 1724.

*While SHERIDAN is off the books,
And friend DELANY at his books.*

Whether this account of SWIFT's be
more to his honour, or the honour of that
antiquated virtue, *sincerity* ; your Lordship
will best judge.

I cannot conclude this subject, without
giving one instance of his conveying fine
praise, under the cover of very rough
words. I had it from one who was pre-
sent at the conversation.

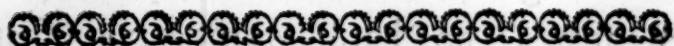
When Lord CARTERET was Lord
Lieutenant of *Ireland*, SWIFT happened
to have a little dispute with him about
the grievances that kingdom suffered
from *England*, and the folly and nonsense
of

of their government in that respect: (for he spared no hard words upon that occasion) the Lord Lieutenant reply'd with a mastery and strength of reason, for which he is so distinguished, and which SWIFT not well liking at that time, cried out, in a violent passion, "What the vengeance brought you
 " amongst us, get you gone, get you
 " gone; pray God Almighty send us our
 " boobies back again.

I am,

MY LORD, &c.

L E T-



L E T T E R I I I .

M Y L O R D ,

YOUR next character of SWIFT is in these words, p. 5. *His abilities rendered him superior to envy.*

That he was superior to envy, cannot be denied. The only question is, whether he was so, from the rectitude and generosity of his mind, or from the pride of superior talents. For my own part, I must own to you, and to the world, that I cannot ascribe it to the latter principle. I am well assured that he well knew Mr. POPE to be much his own superior in epic poetry ; and Lord treasurer OXFORD much his superior in politicks : (a science however on which he valued himself not a little) he knew Mr. GAY to have talents which he himself had not, both for pastoral poetry, and the masterly turn (so peculiar to him)

of

of adapting airs of infinite wit and humour, and with inexhaustible variety, upon every occasion that arose in his inimitable dramatic pieces: and yet it is certain, that he loved these three men, with a very distinguished sincerity and warmth of affection. And it is certain, that two of them made him equal and ample returns. But I have too much reason to believe, that the third, with all his distinguished superiority in the talent he so highly prized, was not yet so clear of that vice, of which you so justly acquit SWIFT.

The truth is, SWIFT loved merit wherever he found it, and never seemed more delighted, than when he could draw it out from obscurity, into an advantageous light, and exalt it there.

Many instances of this generosity of benevolence in him, are yet remembered in the world. He introduced the late Bishop of CLOYNE to Lord B.
in

in the handsomest manner: He told him there was a gentleman of his family, that was an honour to it. And then added, as it were in abatement of his merit, *That he was good for something.*

Not long after, he recommended the same gentleman as chaplain to my Lord PETERBOROUGH's universal embassy; and was successful in his recommendation, to the mutual satisfaction of the patron and his domestick: if he could properly be called so, who rarely lived in the same house with his Lord, and not often in the same country.

He made Lord OXFORD, in the height of his glory, walk with his treasurer's staff from room to room, thro' his own Levy; enquiring which was Dr. PARNELL; in order to introduce himself to him, and beg the honour of his acquaintance: which he did in the most courteous and obliging manner.

My

My Lord OXFORD had desired SWIFT to introduce Dr. PARNELL to him; which he refused, upon this principle: That a man of genius was a character superior to that of a Lord in high station: and therefore obliged my Lord to introduce himself.

Wherever he found the least dawning of a genius, he cultivated it with all imaginable care and kindness: and would chearfully employ many hours at a time, in corrections and alterations of any composition, that carried the least appearance of genius with it: and was happy in starting hints of new subjects suited to the capacities of the persons who advised with him. As he first hinted to Mr. GAY, the subject of his Trivia, and furnished him with a few introductory verses to it.

My Lord, you well know, that it is the truest character of a great genius to be superior to his own talents: and tho' I will
not

not absolutely pronounce of SWIFT that he was so, (for he well knew how to set a full value upon them on occasion) yet I can by no means place his exemption from envy, to the score of his pride. If I were disposed to refine, I should chuse rather to place it to the account of his superior judgment and penetration. He could not but see, that if men of genius steadily and zealously asserted each others merits, they must bear down the world before them. And it is certain, that SWIFT had a sufficient portion of ambition, to make him heartily join in the combination. But then this justice must be done to that ambition, that it always pointed to publick and noble ends.

But to account for this part of SWIFT's conduct and character, in a simpler, and more natural manner. Possibly he might have been of opinion, that the true interests of men of genius, did not interfere, so as to eclipse or oppress one another in the utmost indulgence to each,

It

It must be owned, that they are too often in a different way of thinking. Your Lordship rightly observes (l. 19. p. 14.) *that emulation generally breaks the chain of friendship between poets. They are (you say) running with the utmost eagerness to the same goal: no wonder if in the race they endeavour to trip up each others heels.*

For my own part, my Lord, I cannot but wonder at their folly in doing so: they are indeed running to the same goal; but what is that goal? It is, my Lord, the temple of fame, which hath room enough for fifty times as many competitors, as ever contended in their course towards it: and it is evident, that crossing and jostling in the way, does but retard each, and often ends in the fall of both.

I have heard it observed by men of speculation, who did not scruple to make an open declaration of their opinion upon the point; That the true interest of nations

nations never did interfere. And their contentions and competitions in pursuit of the same points, proceeded from ignorance, and short-sighted views. And I am satisfied, that this might at least, be as truly observed of the genius's of men, as of the interests of nations. And I think, this may be illustrated, by a remarkable instance.

ADDISON and SWIFT more nearly resembled one another in their talents, than any two men of their time. Each of them was remarkably distinguished, for two excellencies : a great fund of true humour, and a fine *English* style. And yet, they always lived in a perfect harmony and remarkable affection and esteem for each other, even in spite of the spirit of party, which divided them. Inasmuch that I have heard SWIFT say, that often as they spent their evenings together, they neither of them ever wished for a third person, to support or enliven their conversation.

I have

I have also, heard him say, that one evening, the conversation happened to turn upon the most distinguished characters in the history of the old testament: in which, SWIFT preferred and supported, that of JOSEPH; and ADDISON, that of JONOTHAN: and after they had urged their reasons on both sides, with a good deal of zeal, for a considerable time; Mr. ADDISON smiled, and said, he was glad no third person was witness to their dispute: recollecting at once, that he was asserting the hero of SWIFT's name, and SWIFT the hero of his: which might be interpreted by a third person, as an intended compliment, of each, to the other. Whereas, in truth, nothing was more undesigned, or remote from their thoughts.

Here it is evident, that their mutual affection made their mutual felicity: whereas, envy, would have had the direct contrary effect.

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An envious man is the worst, and filliest kind of robber ! for he only labours, to take away that from others, which he cannot acquire to himself. And therefore, he seems to act from that principle of barbarian stupidity, which BUTLER takes notice of.

*So a wild tartar, when he spies,
A man that's handsom, valiant, wise ;
Thinks, if he kills him, to inherit,
His wit, his beauty, and his spirit.*

Let me add another little memoir of SWIFT : which I relate with pleasure, not more for his honour, than that of his patron.

Upon the change of the ministry, a report prevailed, that Mr. CONGREVE, was to be turned out of his employment : upon which, SWIFT immediately applied himself to my Lord Treasurer : told him the report ; and added, that a hair of Mr. CONGREVE'S head must not be touched.

touched. To which my Lord replied:
*My good Doct̃or, could you think me capable
 of hurting a man of genius? No, no,*

*Non tam aversus, equos, Tyria sol jungit
 ab urbe.*

As noble an answer, and as fine an application of a virgillian verse, as ever was made.

My Lord, if I remember rightly, *Plutarch* somewhere observes, that nothing more effectually lets us into the true characters of men, than some little incidental, and occasional passages in their lives. This, my Lord, is my apology for these little relations. And if this be deemed insufficient, let my time of life supply whatever is wanting to it. You well know, that an old acquaintance of SWIFT's, cannot be a young man.

You, my Lord, justly make it a praiseworthy part of SWIFT's character, that,
He was undisguised and perfectly sincere.

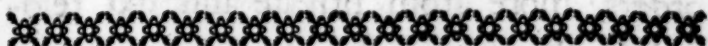
And, I hope, it will be at least a pardonable, if not a praise-worthy part of my character; that I have been very plainly so, in this performance: I could not else be justly entitled to the honour of being, as I truly am,

Your LORDSHIP'S

most faithful,

and most obedient humble servant.

L E T-



L E T T E R IV.

MY LORD,

YOUR next remark on SWIFT is in the same, p. 5.

I am induced to think that he entered into orders more from private and fixt resolution than from absolute choice: be that as it may, he performed the duties of the church, with great punctuality, and a decent degree of devotion. He read prayers rather in a strong nervous voice, than in a graceful manner: and although he has been often accused of irreligion, nothing of that kind appeared in his conversation, or behaviour.

I cannot take upon me to say, what his inducements were to the taking of holy orders: yet I cannot but own, that your Lordship appears very judicious in your conjecture, that he entered into

orders, more from private and fixt resolution, than from absolute choice. And the conjecture seems well grounded, from your just remark in the same page, That his cast of mind induced him to speak and think more of politicks, than religion.

But, pray, my Lord, how shall we reconcile all this, to his chusing rather to take holy orders, than accept the commission of a captain of horse, offered to him by K. WILLIAM. It is evident, this refusal was not the effect of cowardice: in as much as he hath manifested a very uncommon degree of fortitude, throughout the whole course of his life.

The most natural way of accounting for this conduct, seems to me to be this. That he found in himself uncommon talents for writing and speaking in publick: neither of which could be of any use to him in the army. And therefore it was natural that he should chuse
that

that profession, to which he could do most honour, by those talents, and by which he might acquire most honour to himself.

It must, however, be owned, that this resolution was very fixt and steady in him, and in all appearance upon its true foundation, which such an offer, in the prime of youth and vanity, could not shake.

Another resolution seems at the same time to have been as fixt in him: That he would not take orders till he could come into the church, to some advantage. And it is certain, that he ought not to have wished to come into it till he could be properly employed in it, as the canons require.

From all this, I think, it clearly appears, that religious purposes were now predominant in him; and, I verily think, continued to be so.

That they were so, when he was promoted to *Laracor*, is clear; for what else could prevail upon him to propose the taking the additional trouble of reading prayers to his people, in that place, on Wednesdays and Fridays; out of the ordinary course of duty in country parishes.

And it is most certain, that these principles of piety, and right resolutions, were no way lessened in him, upon his being called to the curacy of St. Nicholas *without*, * *Dublin*.

I have a very singular satisfaction, in being able to inform the world, much more truly, than it hitherto hath been, of the true state of SWIFT's mind in the character of a clergyman, at that time. My account I have from a man of character, to whom SWIFT opened himself on that head.

* *N. B.* There are two Churches of this name in *Dublin*. One is called St. NICHOLAS *within*, that is, within the walls of the city. And the other is called St. NICHOLAS *without*.

His

His account is this, that SWIFT frequently took occasion to declare that there was a time when his mind was wholly bent upon excelling in his profession. He hoped, he said, that by diligence, and constant application, and practice, he might arrive to such a degree of reputation in it, as that a question might now-and-then be asked the sexton on a Sunday-morning. *Pray, does the Doctor preach to day?* He then added, with a sigh, that unhappily this purpose was soon overthrown. He was appointed to solicit the *English* ministry, upon the affair of first fruits, and twentieth's; which Q. ANNE'S bounty afterwards bestowed on the church. And in the course of that solicitation, fell into some degree of confidence with my Lord OXFORD: who told him, that their (the then ministry's) intentions were truly national, and honest, but their state uncertain. That if he would stay, and take his chance with them, he should fare as they did. He added,

added, that from that day to this, his head had been taken up with cursed politicks; to the utter neglect of his profession, as a clergyman. Or, if he did sometimes attempt to exert himself in the pulpit, he could never rise higher than *preaching pamphlets*. This naturally accounts for that cast of mind, which turned his thoughts more to political, than religious subjects: and gives a just ground for your remarks.

Your Lordship rightly observes, that he performed the duties of the church with great punctuality, and a decent degree of devotion: but that he read Prayers rather in a strong nervous voice, than in a graceful manner. And let me add, in a voice, sharp, and high-toned, rather than harmonious. But this was not from a defect of devotion, but of nature. He had an ear for harmony of numbers, but not for harmony of sounds. This sufficed to give smoothness to his poetry, tho' not sweetness to his pronunciation. And this

I am assured, was the case of Mr. DRYDEN, the great father of *English* harmonic poetry : and of several others.

As to his religion, I think verily, that I myself have observed many strong indications and proofs of his sincerity in it, (besides those now mentioned). His saying grace, both before, and after meat, was very remarkable. It was always in the fewest words that could be uttered on the occasion, but with an emphasis and fervor which every one around him saw, and felt; and with his hands clasped into one another, and lifted up to his breast, but never higher. The religious and christian form of his last will, and the many prayers composed, and constantly offered up by him, in Mrs. JOHNSTON's sickness, are strong proofs to the same purpose.

There was no vice in the world he so much abhorred as hypocrisy : and of consequence, nothing he dreaded so much, as to be suspected of it. This naturally led
to

to make him verge sometimes too much to the other extreme: and made him often conceal his piety, with more care than others take to conceal their vices. And I have been assured by Dr. DELANY, who lived for a considerable time in his house; that he resided with him for more than six months, before he knew, or so much as suspected that ever he read prayers to his family. Which nevertheless he constantly did, at a fixt hour every night, in his own bed-chamber. To which the servants regularly and silently resorted, at the time appointed: without any notice from a bell, or audible call of any kind; except the striking of the clock. And I am well assured, that when he lived in *London*, his constant way was, to go to early prayers, and sacrament; which he thought made him less distinguished in his devotions. He did indeed often let his light *so shine before men that they might see his good works* (because he could not always hide them) but I am satisfied they were seen much seldomer than

than performed. Because he concealed every character and practice of piety as much as possible, from sight.

I own, I cannot applaud, or even approve of this conduct: a man, peculiarly devoted to the service of God, should carefully guard against the least suspicion, or appearance of irreligion. Always bearing in mind, that fine observation in the Wisdom of Solomon * *they that keep holiness holily, shall be judged holy*. I am much afraid that the example of a conduct, and character, so little guarded as SWIFT'S was, in this respect, has done hurt in the world. God knows, I speak this, with distress of heart, and only from the Christian motive, not of censuring him, but of guarding others.

How happy had it been, both for himself and the world, had he carefully governed his life, by that apostolick, and truly divine precept, *abstain from all appearance of evil*. And more constantly

* Chap. vi. ver. 10.

and

and conscientiously attended to those fine monitions of Solomon, in which he informs us, that *altho' a good name be better than precious ointment* (diffuseth a more delightful, and salutary odour all around it) yet *a little folly* can taint that, and make it offensive to the world, (even in *men of reputation for wisdom and honour*) as a few *dead flies* can this. I am,

MY LORD, &c.

P O S T S C R I P T.

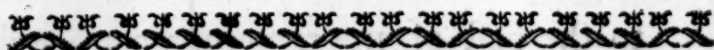
MY LORD,

After a good deal of meditation upon SWIFT'S character, as a man of true religion, I think I have found out one proof of it, so clear, and incontestable, as may well supersede the necessity of any other.

His cathedral of St. PATRICK'S, is the only church in that city, wherein the primitive practice of receiving the Sacrament every Lord's day, was renewed,

newed, and is still continued. And to the best of my remembrance, and belief, renewed in his time. At least, as he was Ordinary there; it could not be continued without his consent. And it is most certain, that he constantly attended that Holy Office: consecrated and administered the Sacrament, in person. Nor do I believe he ever once failed to do so when it was in his power. I mean when he was not either sick, or absent, at too great a distance.

L E T.



L E T T E R V.

MY LORD,

YOUR account of SWIFT's birth, parentage, and education, is so just, that, I believe, nothing is to be added to it. As also your account of the uncreditable manner of his taking his Bachelor of Arts degree, in the college of *Dublin*: which he hath been often heard to say, was owing to his being a dunce. And he explained himself in the following manner: That he looked upon the study of Greek and Latin to be downright pedantry, and beneath a gentleman. That poetry and plays and novels, were the only polite accomplishments.

This disgrace of his degree had, however, an happy effect upon him: and made him immediately turn his thoughts to useful learning. And his going to *Oxford*

ford was not in resentment to the college of *Dublin*, but rather from a principle of pride; to shew how he could succeed elsewhere. The common opinion there, is, that tho' the degree of Bachelor of Arts requires a good deal of study and learning, yet the degree of Master in the college of *Dublin*, requires very little of either. Whereas, on the contrary, the degree of Bachelor of Arts is easy in *Oxford*, but the degree of Master much more difficult, and, of consequence, much more honourable: and therefore he waited in *Dublin* till he was of standing to take his Master's degree: and then he repaired to *Oxford*, and took it there. Which he seems to have done, with a good deal of applause: as appears from that fragment of a letter to his uncle, Mr. SWIFT, which your Lordship hath quoted. His words are these:

I am still to thank you for your care of my testimonial, and it was to very good purpose: for I never was more satisfied than

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in the behaviour of the University of Oxford to me. I had all the civility I could wish for, and so many favours, that I am ashamed to have been more obliged, in a few weeks, to strangers, than ever I was in seven years to Dublin college.

He had often been heard to say, that from the time of his taking this degree, he studied at least eight hours a day, one with another, for seven years. In which time, he laid a large and solid foundation of classick, and other learning. And it was remarkable, that the time of his own hard labour in the attainment of learning, was the test by which he estimated the attainments of others in that point: inso-much, that if any one was cried up to him as a great scholar, his first question was, How old is he? and the next, How many years he had past in a close application to his studies? And if the space fell short of his period, he answered with contempt: He a scholar? 'tis impossible? No man can be a scholar that has not past many

many years in hard study, and an application to good books.

Your Lordship rightly observes, that neither his learning nor his genius were yet arrived to any degree of ripeness, at the time of his writing the Letter above mentioned.

The truth is, early fruits are a lively emblem of early parts; and we know an homely proverb observes of such fruits, That they decay, as they ripen, quick. Whereas, slower parts are a kind of winter fruits, long ripening, but excellent and salutary in their maturity. This observation was familiar to SWIFT: and no question was more common in his mouth than this, *What becomes of all the fine boys one hears of in the world? Can any one shew me one of them grown up into a fine man.* You, my Lord, who are a distinguished good planter, can illustrate this analogy much better than I can pretend to do: can shew the advantage derived

to such plants, as must stand the storms, and are fitted for the rougher uses of life, from their being continued in the nursery, till their stems are straightened, and strengthened: (*Si facis ut patriæ sis idoneus utilis agro*) but not too long, lest weakness attend their height; as ignorance attends pride. And as for such whose merits are derived from their fruit, they, my Lord, you well know, require early pruning. Not indulged in early and luxuriant shoots: but nipped, rather, both in them and their too forward fruits, till their roots are well fixed, and their branches rightly directed, and sufficiently enlarged. But above all, that they must be carefully guarded, against the approach of all other trees, of less excellent kinds: since otherwise, the best Nonpareil will be found easily debased, and degenerated into the meanest Pippin, or fourest, and most shriveled Crab.

But to return, and attend your Lordship in the further account of SWIFT's history. Your account of his marriage,
is,

is, I am satisfied, true. And your character of the Lady, who honoured him with her hand, (so well known under the name of STELLA) is, I really think, just: and for that reason, elegant, and masterly. Which makes the paradox of his never owning her for his wife, still more extraordinary. A woman, who would have done honour to the choice of the greatest prince upon earth. Nay, a woman, who, I have good reason to believe, he was well satisfied, did honour to his own choice; and excelled, even in his own way.

Many instances of this might be produced: and perhaps may, in time. But I shall now trouble your Lordship only with one.

The writing an elegy upon DEMAR, was a subject started, and partly executed in company. SWIFT, and STELLA, and a few friends present. Every one threw in their hint, and STELLA added her's as follows.

*But as he weigh'd his gold, grim death in
spite,*

*Cast in his dart, which made three moidores
light.*

*And when he saw his darling money fail,
Blew his last breath, to sink the lighter scale.*

But the secret of this conduct of SWIFT's toward STELLA, is not however, I think (with great submission) what your Lordship apprehends it: tho' set off with much wit, a fine imagination, and signal sagacity in conjecture.

We are told (and I am satisfied by SWIFT himself) at the bottom of a Letter to Dr. SHERIDAN, dated Sept. 2---1727, that Mrs. JOHNSTON, and Mrs. DINGLEY, were both relations to Sir WILLIAM TEMPLE; at whose house SWIFT became acquainted with them, after he left the University of *Dublin*. Mrs. JOHNSTON then was not the daughter of Sir WILLIAM's menial servant; at least if she was, that servant was his relation.

But

But pray, my Lord, why might not this conduct of SWIFT's, be accounted for upon other principles?

He was in debt, and Mrs. JOHNSTON's fortune small : he could not, in those circumstances, live up to the dignity of his station. Nor would his honour allow him to run the least risque of hurting her fortune ; and therefore, he chose rather to lie by, and save, till he had wherewithal to enable him to appear as he ought. And this, also, I take to be the true cause of his abstaining (as undoubtedly he did) from all marital commerce with that Lady for a considerable time ; to prevent the increase of a family under such circumstances. And before their joint views and interests could be fully answered and adjusted, various accidents intervened ; which rather confirmed than staggered them, in their resolutions of living seperate.

The Dean's disappointments (as your Lordship justly observes) death of friends, and total overthrow of all his ambitious prospects, instead of calming his passions, unhappily fermented, and soured them; by a strange singularity of temper, the withdrawing of the fuel enflamed the fire. This gave STELLA inexpressible uneasiness: and I well knew a friend to whom she opened herself upon that head; declaring, that the Dean's temper was so altered, and his attention to money so increased; (probably increased by his sollicitude to save for her sake) her own health at the same time gradually impaired; that she could not take upon herself the care of his house and oeconomy: and therefore refused to be publicly owned for his wife, as he earnestly desired she should. It was then she said, *too late*; and therefore better that they should live on, as they had hitherto done.

Her

Her resolutions upon this head were (not very long after) fully confirmed; and, I fear, embittered; by the publication of the Poem of CADENUS, and VANESSA: by which the Dean's intercourse with that Lady, was too amply published to the world.

I have good reason to believe, that they both were greatly shocked, and distressed (tho' it may be differently) upon this occasion. The Dean made a tour to the south of *Ireland*, for about two months at this time, to dissipate his thoughts, and give place to obloquy. And STELLA retired (upon the earnest invitation of the owner) to the house of a chearful, generous, good-natured friend of the Dean's, whom she also much loved and honoured. There my informer often saw her; and, I have reason to believe, used his utmost endeavours to relieve, support, and amuse her, in this sad situation.

One

One little incident, he told me of, on that occasion, I think, I shall never forget. As her friend was an hospitable, open-hearted man, well beloved, and largely acquainted, it happened one day, that some gentlemen dropt in, to dinner, who were strangers to STELLA's situation. And as the poem of CADENUS and VANESSA was then the general topic of conversation, one of them said, surely that VANESSA must be an extraordinary woman that could inspire the Dean to write so finely upon her. Mrs. JOHNSTON smiled, and answered, that she thought that point not quite so clear; for it was well known, the Dean could write finely upon a broomstick.

My Lord, I must end here: and perhaps I owe an apology for not ending sooner. The truth is, I knew not how to quit the subject of STELLA; and therefore continued it, until I found myself
sick

sick of her chagrin, and sickness; which followed soon, and sensibly increased after this event; to the great grief of all that were honoured with her acquaintance. Among whom, I shall always be proud to number

Your LORDSHIP'S

most obedient

humble servant, &c.

L E T.



L E T T E R VI.

MY LORD.

AS I engaged in this undertaking, from the motive of a sincere regard to SWIFT'S honour and true character, and a desire of doing some service to mankind, by setting it in a true light; the same principles, will, I hope, bear me out, in passing some censure upon his very mistaken conduct, in relation to STELLA.

Had he taken her to the Deanery immediately after his marriage; and lived with her, professedly in the character of a husband; I verily think, he might have attained all those ends, which he proposed to himself, from his unseasonable and ill-judged prudence, in concealing his marriage so long. He was of a character

rafter, which well enabled him to live in the world, after what manner he thought best: and I am satisfied, he might have kept house at the Deanery, under the direction of his well judged and long-practised frugality and oeconomy with very near, if not altogether as little expence, as they were both at in their separate dwellings: he at the Deanery, and she at Lodgings: constant chair-hire from one to t'other: both their servants at board-wages, and their number greater, than if they had lived together: and at the same time, have effectually guarded against infinite obloquy to themselves, and offence to the world! And yet, blameable as his behaviour was, in regard to STELLA, I cannot help thinking his intentions were upright. And concurring with your Lordship, in those just and judicious distinctions, (p. 40) *He may have been carried away by inconsiderate passion; but he was not to be swayed by deliberate evil. He may have erred in judgment, but he was upright in intention.*

My

My Lord, you, who have seen so much, and observed so well upon the ways of the world, cannot but know, that nothing is more dangerous than a too great love and affectation of singularity: such singularities especially, as carry us out of the known ways, and established course of God's providence, into the by-paths of our own prudence, and superior sagacity. O, my Lord, how honoured and unrepached would SWIFT have lived, and died, had STELLA presided all her life long at his table: delighted his friends, and done honour to his choice, every day of her life! and by her festivity, (for she had a great fund of natural cheerfulness) her wit, her elegance, her humour, her address; set off his slightest entertainments, and brightned them into banquets! let me repeat it again: How much happier had he lived! how much more honoured had he died!

I am assured, that a friend of his had the courage, more than once, to set before him the example of a clergyman of very distinguished merit, in the same kingdom: who married pretty much under the same circumstances that SWIFT did. But instead of concealing his marriage, and by that means, drawing any degree of doubt, or suspicion upon his conduct or character, openly owned it; and declared to the world, that he would retire into very thrifty lodgings, and live so, till he had made a proper provision for his wife. But if it pleased God, that he should live to effect that purpose, he would then keep hospitality and do charity. He kept his resolution, and his word: and hath since been more distinguished in both the laudable purposes he promised to pursue, at the time appointed; than any one man of his fortune in the nation.

He

He early set on foot a foundation for the maintenance of five clergymen's widows, in the diocese where he is beneficed: saw a good estate purchased, and settled to that purpose in a few years. Saw five good houses built, and endowed with an annual fund of twenty pounds each, besides repairs: and for some years past, happily inhabited. In the mean time, he kept hospitality: enlarged his library, built tabernacles (as he called them, for the sons of the prophets,) entertained all the young clergy in the country; and by his learned conversation, and constant good humour; and, above all, by his most exemplary piety, and most constant and conscientious discharge of all the duties of his cure, diffused the influence of his example very extensively, all around him. Profelyted great numbers to the public worship of God: crouded his church with communicants: and then enlarged it (principally at his own expence) to receive more. And still lives, and may he long live, to enjoy all the
con-

consolations of a good conscience in this world, and the glad prospects of increased happiness in another.

His own wish, (or, to speak more properly, prayer) in one latin distich, of his own composing, fixt over the door of his summer house, will best explain and sum up his character.

*Sit mihi prisca fides, mens æqua, et conscia
recti.*

*Sit miseris non parca manus, nec inhospita
mensa.*

Let me add, that he enjoys the solid consolation of having done distinguished good in his life, as I hope SWIFT does now, the publick good which he designed. And is now brought to a happy prospect of attaining all the ends intended by him.

Your Lordship, and the world will, I hope, excuse this digression, for the sake of so singular and so excellent an ex-

F ample:

ample: and now indulge me again, in returning to STELLA.

I am told, some attempt hath been made, towards making a collection of her *bons Mots*: but as I have not the book by me, nor any great opinion of the collector, I shall only beg leave to assure your Lordship, that I have often heard a man of credit, and a competent judge, declare, that he never passed one day in STELLA's society, wherein, he did not hear her say something, which he would wish to remember, to the last day of his life.

One little incident relating to her, will not, I hope, be unacceptable to your Lordship, and to the world.

An humorous, but wrong-judging gentleman of her acquaintance, took it into his head to set up the character of another lady in rivalry to hers: and raised some awkward mirth to himself, from STELLA's sitting silent, at a visit, where
that

that lady displayed her talents. On which occasion, the following verses were sent to him the next morning; probably from some friend of STELLA's: for more than one of her friends were then present.

The LINNET and the JAY.

I.

MONA, by nature, form'd a JAY,
Observ'd a little LINNET,
Warbling melodious on a spray,
Like HANDEL on his spinnet.

II.

Attentive, she revolv'd each note,
And e'er the season ended,
As much improv'd her tuneless throat,
As nature could be mended.

III.

LIN silent heard, but POLL rejoic'd,
Exerts his clumsy tongue;
To praise a JAY so heav'nly voic'd,
And pitty LIN out-sung.

IV.

LIN *smil'd, and sigh'd, My little lays,*
Are native, artless, few :
Content, I quit all higher praise,
To MONA, and to You.

Your Lordship may please to remember, that, in my last Letter, I mentioned a repartee of STELLA's, on occasion of her hearing VANESSA commended: which too plainly shewed that she was stung with jealousy on her account. I remember about that time, I had a little poem shewed to me, with this assurance, that the author must not be known, and would never own it. I thought it most singular, and indeed most excellent, in it's kind. And therefore could not let it out of my hand, till I had got it by heart. Although, I never gave nor published a copy of it, from that day to this. Whether STELLA was the author, or somebody

body else wrote it in her character, from the condition she was then known to be in, I shall not take upon me to say. It is as follows.

J E A L O U S Y.

*O shield me from his rage, celestial pow'rs,
This tyrant, that imbitters all my hours !*

*Ah, Love, you've poorly play'd the hero's part,
You conquer'd, but you can't defend my
heart.*

*When first I bent beneath your gentle reign,
I thought this monster banish'd from your
train :*

*But you would raise him, to support your
throne,*

*And now, he claims your empire, as his
own.*

*Or tell me, tyrants, have you both agreed,
That where one reigns, the other shall suc-
ceed?*

[70]

I shall add no more to the trouble of
this Letter, but a sincere assurance that I
am, with all due respect,

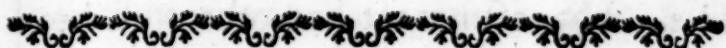
Your LORDSHIP'S

most faithful and

most obedient

humble servant.

L E T-



L E T T E R VII.

MY LORD,

ALTHOUGH I cannot take upon me, to attend your Lordship, in the exact course of your regular literary narrations and remarks in relation to SWIFT's life and writings; yet I shall always beg leave to animadvert, where I apprehend you have been misled by misrepresentation. And one instance of this sort is, I think, in your account of SWIFT's invincible resentment to his sister, incited and inflamed by his pride, on account of her having married a tradesman.

My information, my Lord, was of another kind: and I always understood that his resentment arose from her having married a man, against whom, he had

conceived a particular and personal dislike. His resentment had otherwise been very foolishly founded. For surely he could not be so ignorant, as not to know, that many families of much higher rank than his, have not thought themselves disgraced by their alliance with tradesmen.

Whether his mother removed his resentment, in the journey she took from *London*, on that occasion, I cannot take upon me to say. But this I know to be an undoubted truth: that he allowed that sister a pension: and paid it punctually, from the day of her husband's death, to her own. Which is a clear demonstration, that his resentment, (however founded) was neither immortal, nor invincible.

His frequent journeys to *England* to visit his mother (to whom also he allowed a considerable pension, as long as she lived) are a sure indication, of his filial piety.

piety. And the more than ordinary rapture that exalts his panegyrick upon Mr. POPE's piety to his mother, seems to me, to have been inspired, or at least very considerably raised, by his own. *

Your account of his chusing to lie in his travels, at houses where he found written over the door, *lodgings for a penny*, is, I believe, very just: and I have only to add, that I have often heard him say, that he took particular care to keep clear of being lodged in the same bed with the clowns he conversed with. And that he often bribed the maid with a tester, for a single bed and clean sheets. But I must beg leave totally to differ from you, in what you add, that *the vulgar dialect, you verily believe, was acceptable to his nature. You know not* (you tell us)

* This, my Lord, seems very ill consistent with the justice of your doubt p. 15. Whether SWIFT himself did not acquiesce in the calumny of his being the natural son of Sir WILLIAM TEMPLE. It were strange to imagine him wholly insensible to the truth and power of that well-known observation, *A mother in dishonour is a reproach unto the children.*

how otherwise to account for 'the many filthy ideas, and indecent expressions, (I mean indecent in point of cleanliness and delicacy) that will be found throughout his works.

My Lord, I shall no more take upon me to account with certainty, for this debasement of stile and language in SWIFT, than you can: but this I must own, that nothing is more natural than to take a taint or a wrong turn from the manners of those we converse with, and therefore the sure rule is this, *with the clean thou shalt be clean.* And yet it is certain, that some natures are of a character rather to repel the pollution, than to imbibe it. And I have heard a very able man declare, that nothing ever gave him so just an idea of a good stile, as the reading some of the worst written books that ever were published.

Thus much is certain: that SWIFT never could keep his stile clear of offence,
when

when a temptation of wit, came in his way. This also I know with the utmost certainty : that the defilement became much more conspicuous, upon his return from his first long visit to Mr. POPE: and that in all the time I had the honour to be known to him, antecedent to this æra, his ideas, and his style throughout the whole course of his conversation, were remarkably delicate and pure ; beyond those of most men I ever was acquainted with. And I well remember his falling into a furious resentment with Mrs. JOHNSTON, for a very small failure of delicacy upon that point. I also well remember, his making strange reports of the phraseologies of persons about the court, (and particularly the maids of Honour) at the time of that visit.

It must be owned that SWIFT set out very ill: and that his salamander is the vilest production of the most defiled muse. But I think it will appear from his works, that he reformed from that fault. And, as
if

if he had taken a surfeit of pollution, abstained carefully from it for many years after. But unhappily relapsed into the first infirmity of his constitution, about the year 1723. And from that time, became I dare not say, I dare not think, what. This only I dare say, because truth supports me; that whatever these errors were, they were not as your Lordship apprehends (p. 63) either *contracted*, or *increased* in Ireland.

Indeed one of the first instances of indecency, that I remember in his writings (after that period) was in his dialogue between *Dermot* and *Sheela* (the weeders at *Market-hill*) which being read before a great Lady, and censured by some persons present, for its turpitude, she replied with a smile; there was nothing strange in that, *for we must always expect to see dirt stick to weeds.*

That persons may set out with sufficient refinement in point of delicacy, and yet
after-

afterwards take a strong taint of the other extreme; appears too evidently, from the works of the greatest (at least undoubtedly one of the greatest) of our *English* poets: who, in his *Essay on Criticism*, hath these remarkable lines:

*But obscene words admit of no defence :
For want of decency is want of sense.*

And yet view the same author, in some of his later performances, and you will find him degenerated to the lowest and basest imagery.

I remember to have heard, that a gentleman of his acquaintance, to whom he shewed the manuscript of his *Dunciad*, took the liberty to expostulate with him upon that point; questioning him as follows.

Pray, Sir, do you think there is not something in this poem, that may give offence to persons, that love and honour
you ?

you? or perhaps lessen you in the esteem of persons, whose esteem you value?

To which Mr. POPE answered, *I cannot tell but there may.* His friend then again asked. Pray, Sir, do you think there is any thing in these passages, that I object to, which will raise you in the esteem of any man living, whose esteem you honour? to which Mr. POPE having answered, *I can't say there is.* Another question quickly, and naturally followed. Is all this then worth while?---he then added. Poetry and painting, you know, are sister-arts: and you have called them so, in those fine lines to Mr. JERVAS.

*Smit with the love of sister-arts we came,
And met congenial, mingling flame with
flame!*

A great poet then, is a great painter: would RAPHAEL stoop to paint a charnel or a *dutch* dunghill? or would he not defile his imagination, and debase his pencil
if

if he did? the beauties and the glories of nature, are the proper objects of a fine imagination, and exalted genius, in either art! its deformities, its debasements, depreciate, debase, deprave both. See what TULLY tells you in his *offices*, upon this head. Nature herself in carefully concealing her deformities, her necessities from the eye; reads a lecture of morals to the mind: even what she cannot hide, she plainly and fully indicates should be hidden: and the practice of all countries under heaven, subscribe to this lesson. As doth the languages of all polite countries, and ages.

To me, my Lord, there is something in purity of style so congenial to purity of moral thinking, that I cannot help numbering it among the lesser morals. Indeed I am very unwilling to number it among the lesser, as it is evidently a guardian of the greater.

I have sometimes made it a doubt with myself, which was the greater debasement:

ment: to be a swine in reality, or in poetry! what can be so shocking, as to see the heavenly muse, wallow in the mire! sunk into the character of the basest of all brutes. *Amica luto sus---a swine the friend to filth.* Nay, in truth, debased below it, into the gulph (the jakes) of all human possessions.

You tell us, my Lord, that SWIFT despised logick: I wish he had attended enough to it, to learn (from the art of thinking) and to practise the distinction between different words that convey the same ideas to us. I mean words expressive of the lowest, and the most offensive actions, objects, and offices. Some of which convey the idea of the thing, without the turpitude, or the offence. Whilst others, most disagreeably and deformedly connect and convey both. A strict regard to this distinction must eternally constitute the difference between the language of the vulgar, and the well-bred.

How

How many disgraces of Dunciads, dressing-rooms, and other abominations, and debasements of genius, had SWIFT, and many others, avoided; by a careful attendance to this distinction: and a chaste detestation of the defilements that ensue the neglect or contempt of it! and how had even the sacred page itself (the purest fountain of all true politeness) escaped many coarse translations, that now disgrace it! I shall instance only in one; which I have somewhere met with, but really cannot recollect where.

When MARTHA would dissuade our Saviour, from coming too near to LAZARUS's tomb, for fear of offence, she tells him, in the original Greek, *Lord, by this time he smelleth, for he hath been dead four days.* The expression by which this is translated in our *English* version, shall not pollute my page: and is in truth such, as would more effectually defile the mouth of a well-bred woman,

G than

than onion and asafætida would her breath! whereas, the chaste and elegant style of true politeness, always carefully attended to, thro' life, brings to my mind the purity of that (Mr. ADDISON's) clearlympid stream, which *as it runs refines.*

Reflects each flow'r that on its border grows:

And a new heav'n in its fair bosom shows.

Methinks, my Lord, I see you smile at the impetuosity of my indignant zeal against those defilements of imagination and style, which so often disgrace the works of some of our best writers: and perhaps you will smile yet more, and more justly, when I confess to you, that I do this in the spirit, and with all the Integrity of a romantic hero, who thinks himself bound, at the hazard of his life, to defend the honour, of a renowned, and dignified matron, imagination; (together with that of her fair attendant hand-

handmaid, style) a matron confessedly the parent of the fairest, and loveliest progeny that ever adorned, or delighted the earth. And an handmaid that should be preserved chaste, for the interest of her own beauty, as well as for the honour of her Lady.

I am, &c.

P O S T S C R I P T.

I have taken notice in this Letter, that SWIFT was remarkably guarded in his conversation, against any thing that had the least appearance of indecency, or offence. And you will find, from his Letter to a young gentleman lately entered into Holy orders, how sensible he was of this fault in writing. His words are these,

“ It would be endless to run over the
 “ several defects of style among us: I shall
 “ therefore say nothing of the *mean* and
 “ the *paltry* (which are usually attended
 “ by the *fustian*) much less of the *slowly*
 “ or *indecent*.”

I must confess that such expressions are doubly offensive in sermons, where purity should be in a peculiar manner attended to : but that by no means lessens their offence either in conversation, or writings of any kind. I shall only add, that whatever expression is *slovenly*, or *indecent*, must, at the same time, be *mean* and *paltry*.

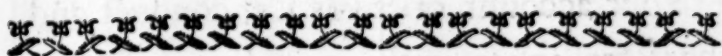
This observation hints to me, to conclude with two of Mr. POPE's lines, only a little altered, and fitted to truth.

*Poets lose half the praise they would have got,
Could they but learn the wisdom, where to blot.*

I am,

MY LORD, &c.

L E T-



L E T T E R VIII.

MY LORD,

GIVE me leave to observe, once for all, that as my purpose never was to censure or pass any forced or affected criticisms on your remarks on SWIFT's life and writings, I hope it will always be taken for granted, that where I do not animadvert, I assent. Nay more, for the most part highly approve : yet when I say this, I hope I am sufficiently sensible, how little honour the approbation of an obscure, unknown man, can do, to such a work as yours : otherwise, than as it is a kind of silent attestation to the truth of your relations. Which to a man, who hath so often been imposed upon by falsehoods, as you most undoubtedly have, is a point of some consequence.

G 3

Your

Your account of SWIFT's conduct and character, when in the confidence of men in power, is, I believe, very just. There is not the least reason to believe, that his mind was either overset, or elated, by that confidence. But there is good reason to believe, that the only use he ever made of it, was, doing (as good angels would do in the same case) good offices, and distinguishing merit, wherever he found it.

Whether the office of Historiographer was really intended for him or no, I cannot say: but the friends to that ministry will always hope, for their honour, that it really was. In as much, as I believe, it must be allowed, that no man was better fitted for any employment, than he was, for that. He loved truth, had courage enough to tell it, to, or of any man living: and sense enough to tell it well. No set of men ever could do more honour to their ministry,

stry, than by placing such a man in such an office. It were in effect, following the example of that excellent Emperor, who, (upon his being raised to the throne) putting a sword into the hand of his friend, added these remarkable words; *for me, if I rule well: against me if I act otherwise.*

But leaving speculation, let us proceed to fact. Give me leave to assure you, that your Lordship's informers never swerved more from truth, than in the accounts they gave you, of SWIFT's reception, when he came to take possession of his Deanery.

I am well assured, by persons who knew it well, that the reception he met with, on that occasion, from all sorts of men, was as kind, and honourable as he could wish.

The Tories were then in full power, in *Ireland*, as well as *England*: and SWIFT's genius was then in its highest glory! he had done the church good ser-

vice: and the credit he had at court, was well known. These circumstances sufficiently assured him of a good, and honourable reception, wherever he went. And the bulk of the people were of the same way of thinking with those in power, at that time. The consequence was, that he was remarkably careffed, and received with very distinguished respect, wherever he came.

Indeed the Arch-bishop of *Dublin*, and some of his old friends, in the chapter, gave some check to that plenitude of power, which they saw plainly, he intended to assert, and exert there. But the integrity, and publick spiritedness of his whole conduct, his care of the cathedral, his attention to its revenues, as well as to those of the Deanery; and his remarkable good oeconomy in both, soon convinced them, that he had no views beyond those of his duty. Little obstructions in personal promotions, he must expect to meet with, and did so.

And

And in that case, his complaint was, that he was but a poor Duke of *Lorraine*, unhappily situated too near the King of *France*: whose tyranny bore him down. But he soon let the world see, that a hero, in the character of a Duke of *Lorraine*, could make his party good even against a great monarch.

It is however true, that notwithstanding all the power and esteem which he acquired in *Ireland*, he always considered himself, as in a state of exile in it. And such a situation, always represents the scenes of banishment, (however beautiful or desirable in themselves) as deserts: and as such incompassed with horrors! and altho' these ideas in SWIFT were considerably abated, and softened by time; yet I verily believe (like the impressions of disappointment in a first Love) they never were totally effaced.

Your next observations, and character of SWIFT, as a writer, and comparison of him

him with his contemporaries, as well as some of the ancients; are not only just, but masterly: but give me leave to say, your additional account of him, is most remarkably mistaken.

I must take the liberty to transcribe your own words, to avoid all possibility of misrepresenting them. They stand thus: p. 66, 67. *After the great names, which I have just now mentioned, it is matter of astonishment to find the same person, who had enjoyed the highest, and the best conversation, equally delighted with the lowest and the worst: and yet it is certain, from SWIFT'S settlement in Dublin, as Dean of St. PATRICK'S, his choice of companions in general, shewed him of a very depraved taste.*

From the year 1714, till he appeared in the year 1720, a champion for Ireland against WOOD'S half-pence, his spirit of politicks, and of patriotism, was kept almost closely confined within his own breast.

Idleness

Idleness and trifles engrossed too many of his hours: fools and sycophants too much of his conversation.

My Lord, you have been so grossly abused, in the accounts, which dictated these two paragraphs to you, that I am almost ashamed to attempt to set you right.

The meanest man, I ever heard of his conversing with, during this period, was Mr. Worrall, a clergyman, a Master of Arts, a reader, and a vicar of his cathedral, and master of the song. He was nearly of his own standing in the college; a good walker, a man of sense, and a great deal of humour. He was married to a woman of great vivacity, good-nature, and generosity; remarkably cleanly, and elegant in her person, in her house, and at her table. Where she entertained her friends, with singular cheerfulness, hospitality, and good humour.

Mr. Worrall's situation in the church, naturally engaged his attendance
upon

upon the Dean, every time he went thither: and their walks naturally ended, either in the Dean's dining with him, or he with the Dean. But as the Dean was a single man, the former happened more frequently: and this intercourse at last ended in the Dean's dining with him, as often as he pleased, at a certain rate; and inviting as many friends as he pleased, upon the same terms.

This gentleman, is lately dead: and hath left a large sum of money to publick charities, and the Dean's hospital in particular.

The Dean's next acquaintance that I shall take notice of, (but whether prior or subsequent in point of time I cannot say) was in a family well known in *Ireland*, by the name of the GRATTANS. They were seven brothers, the sons of a venerable, and well-beloved clergyman, Doctor GRATTAN, who gave them all liberal education: and, at the same time,
(as

(as I have often heard the old bishop of *Clogher* declare) kept hospitality beyond both the Lords who lived on either side of him; tho' both reputed hospitable. One of these brothers was an eminent physician, another an eminent merchant, who died Lord-mayor of the city of *Dublin*: the youngest was first a fellow of the college of *Dublin*, and after master of the great free-school at *Enniskillen*. The eldest was a justice of the peace, who lived reputably upon his patrimony in the country. The three other brothers were clergymen of good characters, and competently provided for in the church. Two of them SWIFT found in his cathedral; nothing was more natural than that he should cultivate, an acquaintance with them. A set of men, as generally acquainted, and as much beloved, as any one family in the nation. Nay to such a degree, that some of the most considerable men in the church desired, and thought it a
favour

favour to be adopted by them, and admitted GRATTANS.

These, my Lord, were men of open hearts, and free spirits: who as little deserved, and as much disdained the character and office of sycophants, as any nobleman of yours, or any nation. And yet these, with their allies the JACKSONS, &c. genteel, agreeable, and well-bred men and women, were the companions of many of SWIFT's easiest, and happiest hours: such companions, as no wise man ever wanted, or at least would want, if he could help it; any more than he would his night-gown, his couch, or his easy-chair: which never were deemed the least useful, nor are they always the least ornamental parts of dress and furniture.

The GRATTANS had a little house, and their cousin JACKSON another, near the city; where they cultivated good humour, and chearfulness, with their trees,
and

and fruits, and sallets: (for they were all well skilled in gardening and planting) and kept hospitality, after the example of their fathers.

The opinion which SWIFT had of the GRATTANS will best be judged of by the following little memoir.

When Lord CARTERET came into *Ireland* as Lord Lieutenant, SWIFT asked him, Pray, my Lord, have you the honour to be acquainted with the GRATTANS? Upon my Lord's answering that he had not that honour, Then, pray, my Lord, take care to obtain it, it is of great consequence: the GRATTANS, my Lord, can raise ten thousand men.

What effect this had I cannot say. I only know this, that Doctor GRATTAN was soon after taken in to be physician to my Lord, and his family.

Whether the GRATTANS led SWIFT, or he them, into the acquaintance of
their

their friends, *George Rockfort*, and *Peter Ludlow*, I cannot say. But this I know, that he lived much with those gentlemen; and cultivated their friendship, with a very distinguished affection, and esteem: and it is certain, that they well deserved the highest regard, and distinction, he could pay them.

----*quales animæ neque candidiores terra tulit;*

Nec quies te magis optasset amicum.

*Such souls! more candid never earth produc'd,
Nor whom, you could more wisely wish your
friends.*

They were men of fortune, scholars, men of parts, men of humour, men of wit, and men of virtue. Greater companions SWIFT might have conversed with, but better he neither did, nor could.

Let me add to these, another gentleman, for whom the Dean had a particular

ticular esteem. MATHEW FORDE, a man of family, and fortune: a fine gentleman, and the best lay-scholar of his time, and nation. These, with the fellows of the College, Doctor WALMSLEY, Doctor HELSHAM, Doctor DELANY, Mr. STOPFORD, (now Bishop of *Cloyne*) and Doctor SHERIDAN, among the men: and Lady EUSTACE, Mrs. MOORE, Lady BETTY ROCHFORD, and Mrs. LUDLOW, Ladies sufficiently distinguished of the other sex; were, with STELLA, and her friends, SWIFT's principal acquaintance, and companions, during the period you mention: and treat as the æra of his infamy.

I might mention some others of very distinguished characters, who made up, I will not say, that admired, but I can say with truth, that envied society, in which, SWIFT passed his life, at that period. But I hope, I have already said sufficient, to

H

set

set your Lordship right; and let you see,
how much you have been abused by your
informers, and in how different a manner,
you have been treated, by,

MY LORD,

your faithful and

most obedient

humble servant.

P O S T S C R I P T.

I know nothing that can be so proper
an appendix to this account of SWIFT's
friends, as his own character of himself
in that point.

See Verses on the Death of Dr. SWIFT, &c.

*Tho' trusted long in great affairs,
He gave himself no haughty airs.
Without regarding private ends,
Spent all his credit for his friends.*

And

*And only chose the wise and good;
 No flatt'ers, no allies in blood.
 But succour'd virtue in distress,
 And seldom fail'd of good success.
 As numbers in their hearts must own,
 Who but for him had been unknown.*

When I own that I had the honour of
 being in the lowest class of these, I hope
 you will not place this confession, more to
 the score of vanity, than of gratitude, in,

MY LORD,

your most faithful, &c.



L E T T E R IX.

M Y L O R D,

HA V I N G informed you in my last Letter, of the company SWIFT kept, in that interval of time, from 1714 to 1720; I now beg leave to inform you, as well as I am able, how he filled up his time in that interval. Not in writing GULLIVER'S travels, &c. I assure you: for they were not written until some years after, as you will easily be satisfied, both from GULLIVER'S own Letter, prefixed to that work, and dated *April 2, 1727*; (he was ashamed to date it the first for a very obvious reason) and from the first impression of that work, which was very early after it was written: no, my Lord, his time was much better filled. The care of his *Deanery*, his *Cathedral*, its regulations, its income, and œconomy, took

took up much of his thoughts at this time. And the acquaintance he fell into with men of learning, (more learned and more in number, than any preceding *Æra* of that kingdom records as cotemporaries) laid him under a necessity of revising his *Greek* and *Latin*, with care. He had not else appeared with the advantage that became him, in that society. Nay, he could so ill bear to be considered as a cypher in any *scientific* society, that he applied himself even to mathematics, in that period; and made some progress in them. And I have seen him more than once, undertake to solve an algebraic problem, by arithmetic.

He went through a very voluminous course of ecclesiastical history, in that period: and I have some reason to believe, that all the knowledge he had of the early fathers, was then also acquired.

His poetic performances during that period, are indeed but few: but those,

which you are pleased to call *poematia*, to STELLA, are excellent in their kind. And I heartily wish you had indulged the benevolence of your genius in giving them their due praise, rather than marking them with a character, doubtful at best, if not diminutive. But you, my Lord, have, I fear, been awed into a restraint of your genius in that point, by that ill-understood, (or otherwise), ill-grounded and illaudable maxim of Mr. POPE.

For fools admire, but men of sense approve.

My Lord, there is such a thing as a foolish admiration, such as that he mentions, in his character of ATTICUS.

And wonder with a foolish face of praise.

But there is also, my Lord, an admiration, which is the genuine offspring of wisdom, and true greatness of soul; touched with congenial excellence, or valuable excellence of any kind. And this is best
seen

seen in generous, and even rapturous praise.

My Lord, praise properly applied, from a clear discernment, and quick sense of excellence; and plentifully poured out from the fullness of a generous, and benevolent heart, is the surest, and noblest test of an exalted, and enlightened genius: as a quick sense, and high relish of excellence is the best test of perfection, and excellence in the sensations, and organs: and the same may be asserted, with equal propriety, of intellectual perceptions, and powers. And give me leave to say, that gentleman had done much more honour to his genius, in giving their due praise to those little odes, the finest in their kind, the friendliest, the best imagined, and most truly elegant that ever any language produced; than in wishing, as he is, (and I fear too truly) reported to have done, that SWIFT had never written them. How would his conscious merit have exulted in him, had they been his own!

SWIFT spent a good part of his time in this period, in reflecting upon, and practising the duties of his profession. This appears from a little poetic fragment of his, to Mr. ROCHFORD, and two of his friends, who made some mirth to themselves, from humorous descriptions of a gentleman's nose; which did not distinguish him half as much, as the good humour, and good sense, with which he joined in the mirth it occasioned. The Dean's little poem upon that occasion, began thus:

*Whilst you three merry poets traffic,
In giving a description graphic,
Of DAN'S huge nose in modern saphic,*

I spend my time in making sermons, &c.

In this interval also, he wrote that fine Letter to a young gentleman, lately entered into holy orders: which must be allowed one of the most masterly of all his performances: and shews a large extent of genius, wit, observation, and learning, through-

throughout. More particularly in his fine account, and high contempt of free-thinkers, and thinking.

Your Lordship observes very rightly, that his spirit of politics and patriotism, was kept almost closely confined within his own breast, during this period; until he appeared in the year 1720, a champion for *Ireland*, against Wood's half-pence.

This latter part, my Lord, with great submission, is a mistake. He had indeed abstained from writing, until the year 1720; but was very far from having abstained from railing, (even in the pulpit) against the wrong politics of *Ireland* for that time. But, when he found them sink under a general discouragement of agriculture, and the stupidity of unpeopling their country, to make room for sheep; at the time, that our wool was a drug; and a monopoly to *England*; he could refrain no longer. And then came out his proposal for the universal use of *Irish*

manufactures: which hath gradually produced, and annually increased, producing inexpressible benefit to his nation, from that day to this.

His Drapier's Letters were not written until four years after this period.

*That his patriot-spirit was restrained so long, is not to be wondered at. He had got enough of politics antecedent to this period, to surfeit, and to make him sufficiently sick of them, for at least seven years; and yet, when a proper occasion offered, he could not, and he ought not to refrain: And his genius never shone out in greater strength than in that, and the subsequent occasions that called it forth. The performances best praise themselves. (*O si sic omnia!*) and your account of them and him, is clear, succinct, judicious, and just; and therefore I shall not presume to add one tittle to it. But I must beg leave to add a little, a very little, to your account of
 Doctor

Doctor SHERIDAN, which is, in the main, just also.

He had a faculty, and indeed, a felicity of throwing out hints, and materials of mirth and humour, beyond any man I ever knew. If he were not the staunchest hound in the pack, he was at least the best starter. Among a thousand other whims, he hit upon one, which occasioned a good deal of mirth. He wrote a copy of verses in circles, enclosed within one another, like those of a sphere; the first, of a large, and the last, of a little circumference in the center. Upon which occasion, the Dean wrote a copy of verses, which began thus:

*It never was known, that circular letters,
By humble companions, were sent to their
betters, &c.*

But the verses written by GEORGE ROCHFORD, (father to the present Lord BELLFIELD) on that occasion, were much
more

more distinguished. Your Lordship hath given us an imperfect copy of them; but without the least hint of applause, or even approbation. And yet, my Lord, I believe, they must be allowed to constitute the most compleat epigram, that any age or nation hath produced. Or, to speak more properly, singular and excellent, beyond any other! SHERIDAN was, as your Lordship observes, a fidler, and a poet: and most certainly understood more of each, than he could execute. And, on his writing the abovementioned circular verses, Mr. GEORGE ROCHFORD wrote the following epigram.

*With music and poetry equally blest,
A bard thus APOLLO, most humbly addrest.
Great author of harmony, verses, and light!
Assisted by thee I both fiddle, and write.
Yet unheeded I scrape, or I scribble all
day,
My verse is neglected, my tunes thrown
away.*

Thy

*Thy substitute here, VICE - APOLLO *
disdains,
To vouch for my numbers, or list to my
strains.*

*Thy manual signet refuses to put
To the airs I produce, from the pen, or
the gut.*

*Be thou then propitious, great PHOEBUS,
and grant,*

*Relief, or reward, to my merit, or want.
Tho' the Dean, and DELANY transcend-
ently shine,*

*O brighten one solo, or sonnet of mine.
With them, I'm content, thou should'st
make thy abode:*

*But visit thy servant, in jig, or in ode.
Make one work immortal: 'tis all I request.
APOLLO look'd pleas'd, and resolving to jest,
Reply'd, honest friend, I've consider'd thy
case:*

*Nor dislike thy well-meaning and humorous
face.*

* A poem had been published not long before, in APOLLO's name, constituting SWIFT, his Vicegerent in Ireland.

Thy

*Thy petition I grant: the boon is not great,
Thy works shall continue: and here's the
receipt.*

*On rondeaus † hereafter, thy fiddle-
strings spend:*

*Write verses in circles: they never shall
end.*

Here, my Lord, you see a double thought, carried on throughout (like a double fuge under the hands of a great master in music) from the first distich, to the last: and concluding in a double point: each, compleat in its kind.

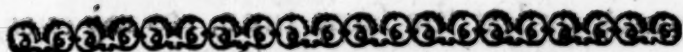
Indulge your genius, my Lord, and give this performance its proper praise, without the least apprehension of suffering in the character of your wisdom, in the estimation of any wise man alive, now Mr. POPE is dead.

I am,

MY LORD, &c.

† A kind of musical air, so constituted, that the last strain, falls naturally into the first.

LET-



L E T T E R X.

MY LORD,

I AM now come to your ninth letter, which hath given the greatest offence to all those that honour the memory of SWIFT; (and I might add to all those that honour you), of any thing in the whole compass of your remarks. Your character of VANESSA, and your account of her miserable situation, in all the supposed circumstances of her *vice* and *vanity*; are such, as might do honour to the best pen, and most upright christian-heart. I say, my Lord, in her supposed circumstances; but, at the same time, give me leave to declare, from the obligations I owe, both to strict truth, and christian charity; that I by no means think those suppositions sufficiently founded. Your observations also on the poem, are, in the main, most judicious, masterly, and just.

But

But your censure of part of it so very severe, and at the same time, to my eyes, and the eyes of those of all the acquaintance I have in the world, so utterly ungrounded, and of consequence so cruel, to the memory of SWIFT; and so heavy a charge upon his virtue; that I profess, I am utterly at a loss, what to say, or how to pass any censure upon it. The passage is this.

VANESSA is going to own herself in love with CADENUS: and, as an apology for that openness, she pleads thus:

*Two maxims she could still produce,
And sad experience taught their use:
That virtue pleas'd by being shown,
Knows nothing, which it dare not own.
Can make us, without fear, disclose
Our inmost secrets to our foes:
That common forms were not design'd,
Directors to a noble mind.
Now, said the nymph, to let you see
My actions with your rules agree,*

That

*That I can vulgar forms despise,
 And have no secrets to disguise:
 I knew by what you said and writ,
 How dang'rous things were men of wit;
 You caution'd me against their charms,
 But never gave me equal arms:
 Your lessons found the weakest part,
 Aim'd at the head, but reach'd the
 heart.*

Now, pray, my Lord, what is there in all this, which the most virtuous man alive, might not own with his last breath, to be his most sincere, and genuine sentiments? for my own part, I can see nothing in it, but a panegyric upon the purity, and noble nature of virtue!

And now, my Lord, what is your comment upon it? would to God I could not tell --- and that it were either utterly unknown, or obliterated from the earth! but since that cannot be, let it once more, I earnestly intreat your Lordship, pass in review before you: in hopes, that your
 I calmer,

calmer, and more candid reflections, may inspire you, totally to erase it. Your words yet subsisting, are as follows :

“ Supposing this account to be true, and
 “ I own to you, my HAM, I can scarce
 “ think it otherwise, it is evident that the
 “ fair VANESSA, had made a surprising
 “ progress in the philosophic doctrines,
 “ which she had received from her pre-
 “ ceptor. His rules were certainly of a
 “ most extraordinary kind. He taught
 “ her, that vice, as soon as it defied
 “ shame, was immediately changed into
 “ virtue. That vulgar forms were not
 “ binding upon certain choice spirits, to
 “ whom either the writings, or the persons
 “ of men of wit were acceptable.”

I appeal to common sense and truth,
 what is all this, but inverting the very
 nature of things, and interpreting the
 native candour, openness, and ingenuity of
 virtue, into all the shameless and aban-
 doned impudence of vice! if this be not
 calling

calling *evil good, and good evil*, I profess I know not what is.

As to the subsequent comment at large, indeed, my Lord, it is perfectly safe from any censure of mine: for reasons which you may much better comprehend, than would become me to explain.

And, pray, my Lord, what could justly hinder VANESSA, from opening her mind freely to CADENUS, upon that occasion? he was a single man, she, a single woman: and her first view, was evidently marriage; and that sure was not criminal. And whether she had any, subsequent to that, which were criminal, neither you nor I can tell: further, than as we may conjecture, from those ill-judged lines, which, although they do not necessarily infer, yet seem to have designedly drawn it into a doubt. O that they were annihilated, or rather, that neither they, nor their cause, (idle vanity) had ever existed in a breast, which should have abhorred *all appearance of evil*.

And yet, how are the criminal surmises
in those vile verses, how can they, be
consistent with those endowments, be-
stowed upon VANESSA, by VENUS first,
and PALLAS afterwards?

From VENUS's *Magic Rites* he tells us,
she derived

----- *that decency of mind,*
So lovely in the female kind!
Where no one careless thought intrudes,
Less modest than the speech of prudes.

After this, PALLAS bestowed upon her
as follows -----

Her soul was suddenly endu'd,
With justice, truth, and fortitude.
With honour, which no breath can stain:
Which malice must attack in vain.

And again,

As she advanc'd, that womankind,
Wou'd by her model form their mind:

And

*And all their conduct wou'd be try'd
By her, as an unerring guide.*

And again, he makes PALLAS speak as follows,

*And tho' she must with grief reflect,
To see a mortal virgin, deck'd
With graces hitherto unknown,
To female breasts, except her own.*

And surely, my Lord, chastity was the most distinguished of all those graces; except wisdom, and fortitude. And was not her wisdom heavenly wisdom? Let me ask then in her own words:

*How can heavenly wisdom prove,
An instrument to earthly love!*

VANESSA is compared to ATALANTA; which is well known, to be a fixt star. And after this, we are told, that,

*To copy her, few nymphs aspir'd,
Her virtues, fewer swains admir'd.*

*So stars beyond a certain height,
Give mortals neither heat nor light.*

And is this fixt star, after all, dwindled
into a mere sublunary meteor; called by
common mortals, a falling star?

I perfectly agree with your Lordship,
that the scheme of this poem is very judicious,
and masterly; indeed, beyond any other of SWIFT's compositions, except that of the Legion Club; which, I think far excels every other of his poetic performances. And yet, I have something to censure even in this, besides those passages, which you so justly blame. The lines are these.

*Where never blush was call'd in aid,
That spurious virtue in a maid:
A virtue but at second hand,
They blush because they understand.*

Give me leave to say, my blood boils
with indignation against the folly, the
vanity,

vanity, (I had almost said the blasphemy) of these lines.

Here, my Lord, the finest instinct, and noblest power, with which God hath endowed the human frame, is treated with scandalous contempt, and insolent abuse! that great and amazing protector of virtue, and avenger of guilt, that astonishing power by which all the blood in our frame rises, in one instant, to repel every attempt, every approach of vice; is branded, not as the genuine offspring of God, but the spurious offspring of prudery, and affectation: to be called in, and cast off at our pleasure.

Let me add to this, the filliness of the petulant censure: *they blush because they understand*. Did not the author of nature mean, that the monitions of this great guardian should be understood? Would infinite wisdom appoint a guardian that could not be understood! by what mechanic powers, or organs, our blood, is thus

flushed into the face of innocence, or flashed into the face of guilt, will, I believe, for ever exceed all the researches of knives and microscopes, and is justly to be numbered among those infinite and stupendous proofs, that demonstrate how *fearfully and wonderfully we are made*: fearfully indeed, in a very particular manner and sense, in this instance: for what can be so noble a guard against guilt, as a just and well-grounded apprehension, that if we commit it, our own blood will take the first occasion to betray us? O pure offspring of heaven, and guardian of goodness; how adorable, and wonderful are thy ways?

How happy had it been for SWIFT, and the world, had he employed many of those hours, in the fine and deep, and humble researches of natural and moral philosophy, which he threw away in the idle sallies of wit, and humour: Instead of suffering himself to be early deluded, and, in the end, almost totally engrossed,
by

by that detestable maxim, *vive la bagatelle!* which, though it seized him not, (at least took small hold of him) until after that, which you were pleased to treat as the æra of his infamy; yet it must be owned, it seized him too soon: held him too fast: and possessed him too long.

Before I conclude this Letter, it will, I think, become me, to make some apology to you, and to the world, for differing from you so totally as I do, in relation to VANESSA's character: which you seem to think, was that of an abandoned woman: and I judge it, only that of a woman, unhappily intoxicated with Love.

First, because such a character as you conceive hers to have been; is, as (I before observed) utterly inconsistent with the endowments bestowed upon her, both by VENUS, and PALLAS. Secondly, because the line which creates the doubt, is very far from inferring a certainty; for consciousness, (you well know, my Lord,)

infers

infers not guilt: for there is such a thing as conscious virtue, as well as conscious vice. Thirdly, because the character you give of CADENUS, could not make such a situation desirable: and, I believe, that in that case, the Lover is not the last person to find it out. And I own, if I were to acquit her character from any principle but that of her virtue, I should rather conclude with your Lordship, that the lines which seem to contain an insinuation against VANESSA, were not perhaps so much intended to wound her reputation, as to save that of her admirer.

My last reason, my Lord, is drawn from a memoir, which seems not to have reached you.

She ordered, in her last Will, that the poem of CADENUS and VANESSA should be published: (it had otherwise perhaps never seen the light) together with all the Letters that passed between them. Dr. BERKLEY, one of her executors, perused these

these Letters carefully, in order to fulfil the Will of his benefactress; but found, upon examination, (as he frequently assured me) that they contained nothing, which would either do honour to her character, or bring the least reflection upon CADENUS. His Letters contain nothing but civil compliments, excuses, and apologies, and thanks for little presents, &c. Whereas, hers indicated all the warmth, and violence, of the strongest Love-paffion; but not the least hint of a criminal commerce between them, in the Letters of either; which it was scarce possible to avoid, in so long an intercourse, had there been any just foundation for it.

Why she should desire that poem, and those Letters to be published, hath never yet been explained, with any appearance of probability. Nor is there, that I know of, any ground for a rational conjecture upon that point, other than this; that she certainly gave herself up (as ARIADNE did) to BACCHUS, from the day that she
 was

deserted. And that intoxication, in conflict with many other tumults in her breast, and perhaps in conjunction with some infirmity in her head, might easily be conceived capable of producing many effects, not otherwise to be accounted for.

I am,

MY LORD, &c.

LET-

LETTER XI.

MY LORD,

I AM now arrived at your tenth Letter, and am sorry to find your benevolence of spirit still under an awed restraint; which prohibits the least panegyric, upon any of the various poetic pieces you met with, in this volume of SWIFT's works. *Many, very many of which, (you tell us) are trifling, and you had almost said puerile.*

The severity of this general censure, naturally called upon your critical justice, to such as you thought deserving of some distinction of another kind.

Among these I own, that when I found you mentioned the poem of DEATH and DAPHNE, I expected to have seen that poem very particularly distinguished. As
it

it appears to me, to be a poem of the greatest singularity, either in his, or any works! finely schemed, imagined, conducted, and executed! and interspersed with many fine strokes of wit, humour, and satire. But praise is not the present taste; and I have lived long enough, to feel the mortification, of seeing COWLEY, and even BUTLER, almost as little honoured, and almost as much neglected as D'URFY. And God knows how long SWIFT himself may survive.

But be that longer or shorter, (as fate and fashion shall please) this little sample of SWIFT'S genius, in equipping Death for his courtship, will, I am satisfied, last as long.

*A consult of coquets below,
Was call'd to rig him out a beau:
From her own head, MÆGÆRA takes
A periwig of twisted snakes;
Which in the nicest fashion curl'd,
Like toupets of this upper world;*

(With

*(With flow'r of sulphur powder'd well,
That graceful on his shoulders fell)
An ADDER of the sable kind,
In line direct, hung down behind.
The OWL, the RAVEN, and the BAT;
Club'd for a feather to his hat;
His coat, an Us'rer's velvet pall,
Bequeath'd to PLUTO, corps and all †.*

But of this perhaps more than enough.
My indignation is called off, to a more
interesting subject.

A friend of mine, turning over the
index of your Letters, shewed me, amongst
the contents of this now before me, these
words ---- SWIFT's *Seraglio* ---- surprised

† The Poem ends with these lines,

*Away the frighted SPECTRE skuds,
And leaves my Lady in the luds.*

I imagine that if SHERIDAN had been the author
of this Poem; he, as a school-master and a punster,
and my Lady then playing at cards, would have
concluded it thus;

*Frighted he flies, as boys from birch,
And leaves my Lady in the lurch.*

at

at this, I immediately turned over the volume: where, to my much greater surprize, I found, after your account of DEATH and DAPHNE, the following paragraph.

“ You see the command which SWIFT
 “ had over all his females: and you
 “ would have smiled, to have found his
 “ house a constant seraglio of very virtu-
 “ ous women, who attended him from
 “ morning till night, with an obedience,
 “ an awe, and an assiduity, that are sel-
 “ dom paid to the richest, or the most
 “ powerful Lovers: no, not even to the
 “ *Grand* SEIGNIOR himself.”

This paragraph, my Lord, gives me great concern, upon many accounts; though I shall mention only this one. That it seems to be written in the stile of a man, who knew what he said to be truth: which yet, most certainly was not, could not, be your case: and therefore I conclude you wrote it in the stile, in which

which it was delivered to you, by your monstrous misinformers.

My Lord, the intercourse, in which my station engaged me, for many years, with the Dean; my long intimacy with his most intimate friends, and the frequent visits to him, which my love and gratitude exacted; enable me to assure your Lordship, and the world, (as I do in the most sincere and solemn manner) that nothing ever was more false, than the informations you received upon this point. And that in fact, females were rarely admitted into his house: and never came thither, but upon very particular invitations: not excepting even Mrs. JOHNSTON: and if I were not much more disposed to undeceive your Lordship, and do justice to SWIFT's character, than to cavil, I could almost infer something like this, from your own words: where you tell us, p. 127; that *not any of his Senators presumed to approach him, when he signified his pleasure to remain in private: and without inter-*

K

ruption,

ruption. Your informers should have considered, how this was consistent with *his house, being a constant Seraglio from morning till night*; but the truth is, that not one of those, you were pleased to call his Senators, ever presumed to approach him, till he very particularly signified his pleasure, that they should: except his near kinswoman Mrs. WHITEWAY, who was often with him; (but not until the latter part of his life): and a friend of hers, who sometimes marketed for him, when his infirmities called for a more than ordinary attention to his diet. But who they were, that could create the idea of a senate in your informers, I solemnly declare, I cannot so much as imagine. And I am fully satisfied, there never was the least foundation for so shameless and formal a falsehood.

And yet, my Lord, as the honour I bear you, strongly inclines me to assent to your positions, where-ever I can; I must own, that if keeping a great number,

ber, and variety of professed nominal mistresses, constitutes the compleat idea of a Seraglio: SWIFT kept a greater, and much more extended Seraglio, than the GRAND SEIGNIOR! And I have had the honour, to be admitted, (more than once) to bear him company in his visits to them. But this, I must add, in support of the credit of your judgment of his constitution, that his visits were always by day-light: and for the most part, in the most open and public parts of the city. But yet, truth obliges me to own, that he also visited some of them, even in by - alleys, and under arches; (places of long suspected fame.)

Let me add, that he kept strictly to that *turkish* principle of honouring none, but such as were bred up, and occupied in some laudable employment. One of these mistresses sold plumbs; another, hob-nails; a third, tapes; a fourth, ginger-bread; a fifth, knitted; a sixth, darned stockings; and a seventh, cobbled shoes: and so on,

beyond my counting. And in all this detail of his amours, I, take upon me to say, that the singularity of his taste, was as remarkably distinguished, as his genius was, in any, or all his compositions.

One of these mistresses wanted an eye: another, a nose: a third, an arm: a fourth, a foot: a fifth, had all the attractions of AGNA's *Pollipus*: and a sixth, more than all those of ÆSOP's hump: and all of them as old at least, as some of LOUIS the XIVth's mistresses; and many of them, (for I must own he had many) much older. He saluted them with all becoming kindness: asked them how they did, how they throve: what stock they had? &c. And as mistresses, all the world owns, are expensive things, it is certain, he never saw his, but to his cost. If any of their ware were such, as he could possibly make use of, or pretend to make use of, he always bought some: and paid for every half-penny-worth, at least sixpence; and for every penny-worth, a shilling.

shilling. If their saleables were of another nature, he added something to their stock: with strict charges of industry, and honesty. And I must once more own, (for truth exacts it of me) that these mistresses were very numerous: insomuch, that there was scarce one street, or alley, or lane, in *Dublin*, its suburbs, and its environs, that had not, at least, one, or more of them *.

And now, my Lord, I must, I fear, in justice, retract one reflection which I passed upon his compassion, in the beginning of this work. For, I cannot upon the strictest re-consideration, ascribe this practice, to any principle less considerable, or

* Some of these we are told (at the bottom of a Letter to Doctor SHERIDAN) he named thus for distinction's sake, and partly for humour; CANCERINA, STUMPA - NYMPHA, PULLAGOWNA, FRITTERILLA, FLORA, STUMPANTHA.

Pray, my Lord, are HORACE's PYRRHAS, and LYDIAS, to be named in a day with these? I hope, when you next make a comparison between HORACE and SWIFT, you will not forget, that he numbered a Goddess among the nymphs of his Seraglio,

less amiable, than that of mere compassion. And yet, I cannot say, that any, or all of them, ever influenced him, either in the composition, or publication of any of his poems: though I cannot tell, whether they might not have occasioned a very celebrated Love-Epistle, from a blind man, to one of SWIFT's favourite mistresses, called STUMPY, from the fame of her wooden leg.

I shall only add, that if charity can cover a multitude of sins, I am almost tempted to think, that this Seraglio of SWIFT's, might, (to human eyes) almost atone for the sinful vanity of one VANESSA: for I cannot help acquitting him of the guilt of all other commerce with her.

I cannot conclude, without owning to your Lordship, that I fear this is one of my black pebble-days: having the mortification to find myself forced, to differ from the latter end of your Letter, as much as I do from any other part of
it.

it. And to declare, that I think SWIFT's little poem to SHERIDAN, and his description of the *carbary* rocks, so far from contemptible, that I deem them excellent in their kinds. The first, from its wit, humour, and ease, and fine penetration into SHERIDAN's true and characteristic genius: and the latter, from its true and conspicuous sublimity! and for this, I appeal not only to the verses themselves, to the *English* translation: to the Ladies, and to all *English* readers of taste; but likewise to the credit of Mr. DUNKIN's genius, who translated it: and is confessedly blessed with a fine poetic spirit: and such as would not waste itself, upon any mean or insignificant subject. And I am satisfied, most *Latin* critics would judge as I do in this point; were their ears as much accustomed to the harmony, and sublimity of some of LUCRETIUS's measures, as they are to those of VIRGIL.

It will not, I hope, be disagreeable to the reader, that I take the liberty to con-

clude this criticism on SWIFT's *carberian* mountains, with an accident which attended him there; of as distinguished a singularity, as any in his life, or writings: it is this.

His curiosity carried him to the brink of this dreadful precipice, and not content with what information his eyes could give him, as he stood over it, he stretched himself forward at his full length upon the rock, to survey it with more advantage. And attempting to rise up again, when his curiosity was as well gratified as it could; he found, as he told me, (for I had it from his own mouth), that he lost ground, which obliged him to call, in great terror, to his servants who attended him, (for he never travelled, or even rode out, without two attendants) to drag him back by the heels: which they did, with sufficient difficulty, and some hazard.

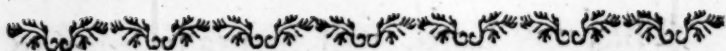
This

This, my Lord, will naturally bring to your mind, that fine idea of the satirist, who paints out vice to us, as standing upon a precipice. But the character, I think, must yet be stronger, more dreadful, and of consequence more affecting, if it be considered as hanging over it, in such a manner, that nothing but the timely aid of a friendly hand, can redeem, and drag us from it: and that, as I believe, too often happens with difficulty) and against the grain.

I am,

MY LORD, &c.

LET-



L E T T E R XII.

MY LORD,

YOUR many and judicious observations upon GULLIVER'S travels, leave little, very material or important, to any that comes after you.

I cannot but lament with your Lordship, that the world hath received so little, either of information or delight from the advantages which a great Genius should naturally be expected to derive to it, from the island of forcerers. Nor was I much less disappointed in the hopes and expectations I indulged, from the idea of a flying island: such an island, in the hands of a wise, and good governor, presiding over an immense extent of dominion, wholly dependent upon him, and submitted to him, might well have afforded matter of much improvement as well as entertainment.

Methinks

Methinks, something might have been imagined in the idea of such a government, analogous to that, of God's dominion over the earth, in various circumstances of which, the presidence, appointments, and determinations of Providence, might be nobly, and delightfully illustrated. But doubtless, my Lord, this required all the powers of the greatest Genius, in its full vigour, whereas SWIFT's genius was then I fear verging towards the decline.

At least, he himself seems to think so, in a Letter to Mr. POPE, dated *Dublin, September 20, 1723.*

This I apprehend to be a date some years antecedent, to the writing of his GULLIVER's travels.

His words are these ;

“ If I could permit myself to believe,
 “ what your civility makes you say, that
 “ I

“ I am still remembered by my friends in
 “ *England*; I am in the right to keep
 “ myself here---*Non sum qualis eram*. I
 “ left you, in a period of life, when one
 “ year doth more execution, than three at
 “ yours: to which, if you add the dull-
 “ nefs of the air, and of the people, it
 “ will make a terrible sum.’

It is certain, that SWIFT was now a good deal past that period of life, from whence ARISTOTLE dates the decline of the human abilities. This period he fixes in the forty-ninth year of the human life. Which, I apprehend was rather done from a superstitious opinion of the product of the number seven, multiplied by seven, than from any exact, and general observation. And yet, although the observation should be general, yet, doubtless, there may be, and are, many particular exceptions to it.

However, I think it is generally agreed among wise men; that few great attempts,

tempts, (at least in the learned way) have ever been wisely undertaken, and happily executed, after that period.

Indeed, in undertakings that depend chiefly upon experience, and observation, as in the affairs of war, and policy; many great things, perhaps more, have been atchieved with success, after that period, than before it. But this I believe must be allowed, that neither the powers of the body, nor of the mind, are ordinarily in their full vigour, after that æra. And therefore, are seldom so successful, where either invention, or great labour are required.

And yet I think, it cannot be denied, that SWIFT's genius made as strong, and vigorous efforts after this time, as ever it had done before. But then, I believe this will be found, upon enquiry, to have been chiefly in works of satire, in which case I look upon a great genius, soured by disappointments and vexations of various kinds,

kinds, to be in the condition of a generous wine, which, upon a new fermentation, (after it hath been long settled upon the lees,) turns vinegar; and by that means, gaineth in sharpness, what it loseth in generosity. And what is worse, by force of that fermentation, turns up those dregs and foulnesses which were before suppressed. And which indeed, made no part of the rich, and generous spirit, which kept them under.

If this was SWIFT's case, which I shall not take upon me to pronounce: it is evident, that many causes clearly concurred to make it so.

First, his detestable maxim of *vive la bagatelle!*

You, my Lord, speaking of his directions to servants, observe very judiciously,
 " That a man of SWIFT's exalted genius,
 " ought constantly to have soared into
 " higher regions. Superior talents seem
 " to

“ to have been intended by Providence,
 “ as public benefits: and the persons who
 “ possess such blessings, is certainly an-
 “ swerable to Heaven for those endow-
 “ ments, which he enjoys, above the
 “ rest of mankind---the Dean it seems
 “ had not this way of thinking.’

No, my Lord, he trifled; and, the mind once habituated to trifles, becomes gradually (tho’ perhaps by degrees scarce perceptible) debased to mean, and insignificant ideas: and from that moment can never rise up to any thing truly great and sublime. Quite otherwise; it gradually sinks step by step, lower and lower, till it arrives at the bottom of the *Bathos*, or ceases to all appearance in a blank.

This evidently appears to have been SWIFT’s condition, from that Letter of his own to Mr. GAY, quoted by your Lordship, dated *August 28, 1731*, wherein he tells him, *That the most arrant trifles of his former writings, are serious philoso-*
phical

phical lucubrations, in comparison to what he now busies himself about: and his conclusive words are;----as the world may one day see.

Another cause of this decay in his understanding, was that sourness of temper which his disappointments first created in him: and the indulgence of his passions perpetually increased. This also inflamed his spirit of satire, and with that his aversion to mankind. For satire is a kind of anti-flattering glass, which shews us nothing but deformities, in the objects we contemplate in it: and deformities naturally create aversions. And all these infelicities of temper, were remarkably augmented after the death of Mrs. JOHNSTON: whose cordial friendship, sweet temper, and lenient advice, poured balm and healing into his blood; and kept his spirits in some temperament: but as soon as he was deprived of that *medicine of life*, his blood boiled, fretted, and fermented, beyond all bounds.

bounds. And his reason gradually subsided, as his passions became predominant.

It was not long before his avarice came in aid of his passions; and in conjunction with those persons, who are said to have desired to make a monopoly of him, banished his best friends from about him: for he could not bear that very moderate expence of entertaining of them as usual. And this unhappy habit would sometimes carry him so far, as to refuse them a single bottle of wine.

The want of this intercourse, and the solitary condition to which it reduced him, deprived him, in a great measure, both of the number of his ideas, and the choice of such, as a chearful, select, and learned conversation naturally suggested to him. His passions impaired his memory, and his solitude unfurnished it.

And to this end, another cause also contributed; an obstinate resolution, which

L

he

he had taken, never to wear spectacles. A resolution, which the natural make of his eyes, (large and prominent) very ill qualified him to support. This made reading very difficult to him : and the difficulty naturally discouraged him from it : and gradually drew him, in a great measure, to decline it. And as he was now at a loss how to fill up that time which he was before wont to employ in reading, this drew him on to exercise, more than he ought : for that he over-exercised himself is out of all doubt.

His physicians and friends, Doctor HELSHAM and Doctor GRATAN, frequently admonished him of his doing so : but he paid no sort of regard to their monitions.

The truth is, his spirit was formed with a strong reluctance to submission of any kind. And he battled almost as much with the infirmities of old age, as he did with the corruptions of the times. He
walked

walked erect: and the constant and free discharges by perspiration from exercise, kept him clear of coughs and rheums, and other offensive infirmities of old age. But he carried this contention, (as he was apt to do every other) too far.

This incessant and intemperate exercise, naturally wasted his flesh, and exhausted the oil of his blood; and his lamp of life was then in the condition of an ill-tempered candle, which frets and flames at once: and exhausts itself in proportion as it frets.

He was himself very sensible of his condition: and takes notice of it in a Letter to Doctor SHERIDAN, *May 22, 1736*; he tells him, "Your loss of flesh
"is nothing, if it be made up with spirit.
"God help him who hath neither. I
"mean myself. I believe I shall say
"with HORACE, *Non omnis moriar*. (I
"shall not all dye) for half my body is
"already spent."

L 2

But

But although he was reduced to that emaciated condition; yet had he no more mercy on the half that remained, than he before had for the half that was exhausted.

The truth is, he was weary of life: and therefore under no solicitude to prolong it. Present health was his great concern: and he imagined, (although erroneously) that his course of exercise contributed to it: and in that persuasion, resolutely continued it.

A friend of his, found him in this condition one day; and SWIFT, putting the question to him, whether the corruptions and villainies of men in power, did not eat his flesh, and exhaust his spirits? he answered, that in truth they did not: he then asked in a fury, why,--- why, --- how can you help it, how can you avoid it? His friend calmly replied, because I am commanded to the contrary.

trary. *Fret not thyself because of the ungodly.* This raised a smile, and changed the conversation to something less severe and sower.

That his passions, and over-exercise impaired his health, appeared to a demonstration, soon after he was reduced to a state of idiotism, and ceased from walking. For then, he remarkably recovered his flesh, in a small time. But that his blood was not reduced to that state of black-bile, which physicians (as you have shewn from Doctor MEAD) describe to be its ordinary condition, in a state of lunacy; nor his brain become dry by it; appeared clearly from the opening of his head, after his death: when his brain was found remarkably loaded with water: which I have often heard Mr. STEVENS, an ingenious clergyman of the diocese of *Dublin*, pronounce to be his case during his illness: begging, and intreating, his friends, and his physicians, that his head might be trepanned, and the water taken

away, which he was sure would remove his distemper, and recover his reason: but his physicians paid no regard to this judgment.

However, that he had certain short intervals of reason, may, I think, be plainly gathered from the accounts you received of him, from some of his friends, in his sad deplorable state: and this farther account also, which I have from good authority: that after he had been silent a full year, his house-keeper went in to him, in the morning, on the 30th of *November*; told him it was his birth-day, and that they were providing bonfires, and illuminations, to celebrate it as usual. To which he answered, *it is all folly, they had better let it alone.*

I would fain flatter myself, that he felt at this instant, the folly of his former indulgence in the pride of parts: and felt at the same time, the justice of the divine chastisement upon him, in gradually taking

ing away those tallents, which being bestowed for the noblest purposes, were too often employed, or, to speak more properly, abused to the meanest. And that he did feel the chastisement, I am fully convinced, from his own bitter complaints to me on that head; lamenting in a manner, that pierced me to the heart, that *he was an idiot; that he was no more a human creature, &c.*

As a good deal of this Letter hath been taken up, in assigning the natural causes, (without the least thought of excluding the judicial, mentioned by your Lordship) of SWIFT's gradual decay in understanding, and final reducement to a state of idiotism. Give me leave to conclude this Letter, with the condition, and character of another gentleman, who remarkably improved in his understanding, in the decline of life; by cultivating a disposition, employments, and pursuits of a contrary nature, to those of SWIFT's.

L 4

This

This gentleman, had been in his youth, a man of pleasure; and was, in the prime of his understanding, exalted to a learned station: from which the violence of party deposed him, towards the decline of life.

He then retired to his country-seat, and there gave himself up to religious reflections, upon his past life; and a course of reading suited to them: particularly, the study of those excellent discourses, preached in the several courses of the Lectures founded by Mr. BOYLE, that great honour of your great ancestor!

By the perpetual perusal of these lectures, this gentleman's mind became so manifestly improved, and enlarged, that he became quite another man: and acquired a new dignity, very superior to that, which his high station had before conferred upon him.

I speak this from personal, and certain knowlege. And his son, a man of excellent

cellent understanding, confessed, and declared the same thing to me, over and over, with great satisfaction. Glorious Lectures, that could at once enlarge the understanding, and amend the heart! how delightful is such an approach to the grave refining in virtue, and progressive in wisdom!

I have often heard it said, that no man was ever appointed preacher of those lectures, that did not exceed himself in his performances on that occasion; far beyond any thing, that he had ever attempted, or endeavoured before!

Blessed state, of that blessed spirit, that founded them! might not such a spirit be properly considered, as a kind of Vicegerent to heaven; diffusing, and multiplying, true happiness upon the earth: living in an annual, a dayly, additional increase of happiness, from that day, to this. And may he live, (as I doubt not but he will) in that blessed state, long beyond the
duration

duration of the world: which he hath so blessed, and honoured! an example of glorious imitation, and emulation to mankind: and more particularly to those of his own family.

I am,

MY LORD, &c.

P O S T S C R I P T.

My Lord, I troubled you in this Letter, with an instance of a gentleman of another country, whose mind was remarkably improved, and enlarged, in the decline of life: by turning his thoughts to studies of a nobler nature, than those, in which his youth and manhood had been conversant.

I needed not to have referred you so far from home, for an example upon that head; when your own country

country supplied you with one, much more illustrious, in the person of the celebrated Mr. WALLER, the poet! whose understanding, it is agreed on all hands, was in its full vigour, to the last year: nay, in truth, I believe, to the last hour of his life. Nor, is this hard to be accounted for? he was now, free from the turbulence and dissipation of those youthful appetites, and passions, which cloud the mind, and intercept the noblest prospects, from the human eye. Nor were they succeeded by that sourness from crosses, and disappointments, which contract, and (as it were) shrivel up the soul; and shut out the noblest objects and entertainments, of a rational, and immortal spirit. Quite otherwise: they seem to have been succeeded in Mr. WALLER, by that calm, which ease and affluence, naturally introduce at that period, into a studious and philosophic mind; and best fits for a clear, and

and sedate attention, to its most interesting, and important pursuits.

It appears evidently, from his own works, that the study of the Scriptures employ'd his latter years.

The purpose of his Cantos of divine Love, was evidently, to assert the authority of the Scriptures: the transcendent love of God to man, evidenced in the creation; and yet, more transcendently evinced in the redemption: together with the infinite, and unspeakable blessings, arising from a cordial attachment to it; and an humble, and adoring veneration of it.

His introductory lines, are at least, as fine as those of MILTON, to his *Paradise lost*: and those which conclude his Cantos, upon the fear of God, are written in a strain, of as much good sense, and fine wit, as any that he wrote in the full vigour of
of

of life. They will best illustrate their own excellence; and therefore, I am satisfied, the reader of taste, will not only indulge me, in subjoining them; but also, thank me for so doing.

Of Divine L O V E:

C A N T O I.

The grecian muse has all their Gods surviv'd,

Nor JOVE at us, nor PHOEBUS is arriv'd;

Frail Deities, which first the Poets made,

And then invoc'd, to give their fancies aid!

Yet, if they still divert us with their rage,

What may be hop'd for in a better age;

When not from HELICON'S imagin'd spring,

But sacred writ, we borrow what we sing?

This with the fabric of the world begun,

Elder than Light, and shall outlast the Sun.

Before

Before I proceed to the concluding lines of his Canto, upon the fear of God, it will not be amiss to mention the high opinion, which all his cotemporary poets, had of these performances: as far exceeding every thing else he had written, which may be seen from their several poems in praise of them; collected in Mr. DRYDEN's miscellanies. As also the high opinion, which Mr. DRYDEN himself, had of his genius, in this last stage of his life.

The two last Lines of Mr. WALLER, in those verses, called the last in the book, were these, ----

*Leaving the old, both worlds at once they
view,
That stand upon the threshold of the new.*

Upon which, Mr. DRYDEN wrote some lines; of which, I can remember no more than this fragment.

----- *Still*

----- Still on the threshold stand:
 Still at this distance, view the promis'd
 land.
 Tho' thou may'st seem, so heav'nly is thy
 sense;
 Not going thither, but just come from
 thence.

The lines with which Mr. WALLER
 concludes his Canto, on the fear of
 GOD, are as follows.

Silence, my muse! make not these jewels
 cheap,
 Exposing to the world, too large an heap.
 Of all we read, the sacred writ is best;
 Where great truths are, in fewest words
 exprest.

Wrestling with DEATH, these Lines I did
 indite,
 No other Theme cou'd give my soul delight.
 O that my youth had thus employ'd my pen!
 Or that I now cou'd write as well as then!

But

*But 'tis of grace, if sickness, age, and pain,
Are felt as throws, when we are born again:
Timely they come, to wean us from this
earth;*

As pangs that wait upon a second birth.

This exaltation of genius, from the study of the Scriptures, is, I think, very plainly, and obviously, to be accounted for. The mind naturally opens and expands, in proportion to the grandeur and sublimity of those ideas, that attract, and engage its attention. And considering the state of error and ignorance, in which we are immersed here below; the soul in this world, seems to me, to be in the condition of the eye in the dark: whose pupil, then naturally dilates, and enlarges itself, to take in all the rays of light that encompass it.

I am,

MY LORD, &c.

L E T-



L E T T E R XIII.

MY LORD,

THE freedom which I took of censuring SWIFT's errors in my last, and some former Letters; will, I hope, give you full satisfaction (if it be possible you should want any) that wherever I am so unhappy as to differ from your Lordship in my accounts or opinion of him, I do it, from the sole impulse of truth, and justice. And when I presume to make additional observations, it is, where you appear to me to have touched too lightly and dwelt too little. And this, I apprehend, is the case in relation to the voyage to the *Houyhnhnms*, a piece more deform, erroneous, and (of consequence) less instructive, and agreeable, than any of his productions.

M

As

As I have marked the passages that seemed to me most faulty, and gave me most offence; I beg leave to point them out, as they come in my way: without any further preface, or apology.

The picture he draws of the *Yabcos*, is too offensive to be copied, even in the slightest sketch. And therefore I shall only observe, that whilst he is debasing the human form to the lowest degree of a defiled imagination, he yet allows some powers in it, of a very distinguished nature. Strength, activity, and *prodigious* agility.

You, my Lord, have sufficiently expatiated upon the powers of the human mind, which so remarkably distinguish and exalt our species above the whole animal world; and I am highly delighted with your quotation from SHAKESPEAR upon that head. Give me leave to throw out a few hints upon the structure of the human frame: which demonstrate that
also

also very superior to the make of all other animals. Infomuch that he evidently excels every other species, not vastly exceeding himself in bulk, and the advantages arising from it in every power in which they excel all others. He can out-run a horse, (the *Hottentots* are known to do so) out-leap an antelope, out-swim a shark: leap into the sea, combat with, and conquer that fiercest and most destructive of sea-monsters, in his own element.

He can carry a load under his arms, and on his shoulders, which would break the back of a horse.

He can dart himself into the air; turn in it, heels over head, inverting the centre of gravity, with an amazing power; and then bring his feet firm to the ground, with the utmost security. Which no other animal in the universe can do, nor any thing like it; except the action of one kind of fowl, whose wings,

then extended in the air, leave nothing surprising, or extraordinary in the action.

I own, I have often gone to see most of the famed rope-dancers, and posture-masters, upon this sole principle of admiring those amazing powers, with which God hath endowed the human frame; and such as the most active, and agile of all other animals, can, with the utmost force of human industry, be brought only to imitate very imperfectly.

Among other advantages devolved upon the human species, above the brutes, is, that of the erect figure of his body; which SWIFT well knew; and the reader of any science will little need to have explained to him. And yet SWIFT satirises even this advantage. But he had sense enough to put the objection made to it, into the mouth of a *Houyhnm*, who could know no better.

If

If it be asked to what purpose this display of powers in the human make?

I answer, to demonstrate the divine wisdom, in preparing such a body for the habitation of a reasonable soul, in which only it could exert all its faculties, to all the purposes of a reasonable creature condemned to support his life by labour, and arts of various kinds: as also to shew, the superiority of man, in every respect.

Next to man, a horse is generally allowed the noblest animal of the inferior world. And yet what a clumsy condition does the human soul appear to be in, when supposed to be lodged in that form, utterly incapable of the meanest of those innumerable and important actions, and offices, which distinguish the lowest class of mankind.

This voyage is considered as a satire of SWIFT's upon the human frame. I

would fain hope, that it was intended only as a satire upon human corruptions: be that as it may, it is most certainly in effect a panegyrick upon the human frame, by shewing the utter inability even of the noblest structure of inferior animals: to answer the purposes of a reasonable life in this world. To answer even the lowest, and meanest of those purposes. The utmost capacity, with which even SWIFT, with all his wit and invention, was able to endow his *Houyhnhnms*, was that of carrying a little oats between his hoof and his fetlock: and what a fine figure must he make, even in that action, hobbling awkwardly, upon three legs!

He talks indeed of their untying the *Yabees*, and giving GULLIVER a bowl of milk: but was far from being able to endow them with the power of doing either.

He places them in houses, which they could not build; and feeds them with corn,

corn, which they could neither sow nor reap, nor save. He gives them cows, which they could not milk, and deposits that milk in vessels, which they could not make, &c.

But it were time thrown away, to expose the weakness of his attempts, to equal the *Houyhnhnm* structure to the human: nor could they be serious to any other purpose than that of abandoned satire.

Let us examine next, into the qualities and powers, with which he endows their mind.

He distinguishes their manners by two qualities; decency, and cleanliness: by which he plainly confesses, that both are the natural effects of reason. And yet he, at the same time, demonstrates himself to be mentally lost to both! what then becomes of his rational faculty? he gives cleanliness to creatures, who have no capacity of cleansing themselves. and

deprives the only being of it, that hath that capacity.

The offensive smell with which he poisons them, and every thing about them, is ordinarily the natural effect of great negligence, in the article of cleanliness; and the providential chastisement of it: and yet he charges it upon the nature of the *Yahoos*; forgetting how he had before endowed his favourite *VANESSA*; when *VENUS* had sprinkled her with nectar, from her sprig of *Amaranthine* flowers.

*From whence the tender skin assumes,
A sweetness above all perfumes:
From whence, a cleanliness remains,
Incapable of outward stains.*

He charges them with monstrous claws, which can be of no use, but to offend, and injure their fellows: forgetting, that at the same time, he made their hands as useless, to any of their proper purposes

poses (even that of climbing, with which he endows them) as if they were mandarines of *China*: a nation the silliest, of all the silly pretenders to wisdom, that ever disgraced pride! estimating the superiority of their mental powers, by impairing those of the body: disabling the better sort of one sex in their feet, and those of the other, in their hands.

He endows his *Houyhnhnms* with friendship and benevolence; the necessary consequences of reason: and yet, he almost professed himself devoid of both. Amazing debasement!

And he deprives them of all those tender passions, and affections, without which life would be a load: and which, when he lost, his own became so.

And what are the effects of those superior powers of unbiassed reason, with which he endows them? they met once a year, to run, and leap; and plunge them-

themselves in cold water; and once in four years to make laws which nobody was bound to obey.

For the rest, his whole reasoning tends to no other purpose, than to establish that principle, long since exploded in the schools: that would infer, the disuse of all things most valuable and desirable in the world, from their abuse. Kings, ministers, laws, physick, wine, riches, love, &c. But what he means by the acuteness of his master *Houyhnhnm*, which daily convinced him of a thousand faults in himself, whereof he had not the least perception before; and which, with us, would never be numbered, even among human infirmities, I confess, I can neither comprehend, nor conceive.

Upon the whole, I am clearly of opinion, that he would more effectually have endeavoured to amend mankind, by putting the virtues, and the suited practice of one, even imaginary good man,

man, in a fair and amiable light, than by painting the depravities of the whole species in the most odious colours, and attitudes! who would not wish rather to be the author of one *Arcadia*, than fifty *Laputa's Lilliputs*, and *Houyhnhnms*.

I am fully satisfied, that exaggerated satire, never yet did any good, nor ever will. The only satire that can do any good is that which shews mankind to themselves, in their true light; and exposes those follies, vices and corruptions of every kind, in all their absurdities, deformities, and horrors, which flattery, self-love, and passions of any kind, had hitherto hid from their eyes. That magnifying-glass, which enlarges all the deform features into monstrous dimensions, defeats its own purpose: for no man will ever know his own likeness in it: and, consequently, tho' he may be shocked, he will not be amended by it.

I cannot help thinking, that if SWIFT had recovered one hour of rational reflection

tion, after the signal chastisement of his total infatuation, he would have numbered his latter works, among the follies of his life; and lamented himself in a strain something like those lines, which I have somewhere met with.

*O life how art thou made a scene,
Of follies first and last;
Rejoicing in the present train,
Repining at the past.*

I am sick of this subject; and now have done with every thing relating to SWIFT, except some particularities in his conduct and character, which could not have fallen under your notice, and yet may be of some use to be known, which will draw upon you the trouble of another Letter or two, from

Your most faithful

and most obedient

bumble servant.

P O S T.

P O S T S C R I P T.

Upon reflection, my Lord, I am greatly surprised, that in writing of the *Yaboos*, and the defilement of SWIFT's imagination upon that subject, I should say nothing of himself; who was of a character so very contrary to those hateful animals, which he so strangely brutalized, even below brutality.

The truth is, that he was in his person, one of the cleanliest men that ever lived; cleanly in every character and circumstance of that personal virtue, to the utmost exactness, and even feminine nicety.

His hands were not only washed, as those of other men, with the utmost care, but his nails were kept pared to the quick, to guard against the least appearance of a speck upon them. And as he walked much, he rarely dressed him-

himself, without a basin of water by his side, in which he dipt a towel; and cleansed his feet with the utmost exactness.

He was not only remarkably cleanly, in his own person, but also a great, constant, and earnest recommender of it to others: particularly the ladies of his acquaintance.

He had a fixt persuasion, that a certain degree of exercise was absolutely necessary, not only to health; but also to cleanliness. To keep those pores of the skin free and clear, by which the great and important discharges of our frame, by insensible perspiration, are performed. And without which, the human frame cannot be preserved in any thing like its original perfection and purity.

Upon this principle, no question oftner recurred to his acquaintance of the
other

other sex, than this. Why do not you exercise? Why do not you exercise? You Ladies pique yourselves upon nothing more, than an exact cleanliness, and its consequence, sweetness; and nothing can be wiser, or better judged, than your doing so. But why will you not use the means, the proper means, to those desirable ends? upon my conscience, if you do not exercise, you cannot have the benefit, or advantage of either.

How then shall we, consistently with his own example and advice, how can we account for his branding the *Rabbos* with so contrary a character, unless from his own very false definition of a nice man: or else (I had almost said) from the prudery of cleanliness?

But I retract the thought: he had nothing in the least degree, hypocritical, or affected in him; unless the affectation, of disclaiming all the appearance

pearance of piety, for fear of bringing its reality into question. It could proceed then from nothing, but either that general misanthropy, which he had unhappily contracted; or an opinion, that he had a right to satirise a vice, (for sloth and all its issue, are at least personal vices) from which he himself was so remarkably clear.

But however, the satire upon vice and the amendment of mankind by it, was his main view even in that abominable picture, which he drew of the *Yahoos*; may, I think, be fairly concluded from his own verses on the death of the Doctor SWIFT, which he puts in the mouth of an impartial man.

*As for his works, in verse and prose,
I own myself no judge of those.*

*Nor can I tell what criticks thought 'em,
But this I know, all people bought 'em:*

As

*As with a moral view design'd,
To cure the vices of mankind.*

And again,

*Perhaps I may allow the Dean
Had too much satire in his vein,
And seem'd determin'd not to starve it;
Because no age could more deserve it----
Yet malice never was his aim:
He lash'd the vice, but spar'd the name.
His satire points at no defect,
But what all mortals may correct.*

Now it is evident that his satire upon the
Yahoos, comes clearly within this last
character.

This is his comment upon his own intentions. And a man of his integrity and truth, hath an undoubted right to be believed upon his declaration of that integrity.

N

Upon

[178]

Upon this principle, I flatter myself,
that I shall find full credit in this
declaration, that I am very truly,

Your LORDSHIP'S

most faithful, &c.

L E T-



LETTER XIV.

MY LORD,

IN your nineteenth Letter, where you form a short comparison between SWIFT and POPE; you observe of the latter, *that his manners were delicate, easy, and engaging: and he treated his friends with a politeness that charmed, and a generosity that was much to his honour. Every guest was made happy within his doors: pleasure dwelt under his roof, and elegance presided at his table. Doctor SWIFT was of a different disposition.*

It must be owned, indeed, that SWIFT treated his friends in a very different manner: but yet most certainly, not with less elegance, politeness, or generosity. Although for the most part under the contrary appearances.

His way was, instead of pressing or courting, rather to affect a kind of reluctance, and fear of his being devoured by their eating and drinking with him.

His meat was but little, yet much more than Mr. POPE's: and his wine, out of all proportion, more: and excellent in its kind. And yet never beyond the most rational bounds of temperance.

The truth is, he had not the least turn, or inclination to intemperance of any kind. His taste was just, in the main: though, I think, not remarkably critical.

I have often heard him declare, that if a phillip of his finger would support nature, he would never give himself the least trouble, about the most delicate food upon earth.

Here it is evident, he did not resemble HORACE: nor can he either on this, or any other account, be justly numbered of EPICURUS's herd.

I have also often heard both him, and another person, mention the manner of living at Mr. POPE's.

There never was more than one pint of wine called for at night, among four of them; of which Mr. POPE having drank one or two little glasses, got up, and going to-bed, called to hem, Well gentlemen, I wish you a good night, I leave you to your wine.

I have already said, that SWIFT's meat was but little: by which expression I meant, that it was so, comparatively, with the usual entertainments of that country. It was at all times very moderate: and when those persons which he distinguished in a particular manner, as Lady EUSTACE, Mrs. MOORE, &c. invited themselves to dine with him (which they must do, or want a dinner for him): he always advanced to them money enough to buy a dinner, at a certain rate for each: not exceeding one shilling

a head; and would contend hard, that no more than six - pence, should be allowed for the brat: so he called Lady EUSTACE'S daughter, now Mrs. TICKELL.

This known character of SWIFT'S, occasioned some humorous epigrams at that time: which, very possibly, might not have reached your Lordship.

SWIFT'S predecessor, Doctor JOHN STERN, was very hospitable: but not much distinguished for taste, either in wine, or victuals; plenty was all that he regarded. SWIFT'S character, in these articles, hath already been shewn; which occasioned the following epigrams, which were written in the windows of the Deanery.

*Are the guests of this house, still doom'd
to be cheated?*

*Sure the fates have decreed, they by halves
shall be treated.*

In

*In the days of good JOHN, if you came
here to dine,*

*You had store of good meat, no choice of
good wine.*

*In JONATHON'S days, if you come here
to eat,*

*You've choice of good wine, no store of
good meat.*

*O JOVE, then how fully might all sides
be blest,*

*Would'st thou but comply with this humble
request?*

*Put both Deans in one, or if that's too
much trouble,*

*Instead of the Deans, make the Deanery
double.*

A N O T H E R.

*A Bard, on whom PHOEBUS his spirit
bestow'd,*

Resolv'd to acknowledge the bounty he ow'd:

*Found out a new method, at once of
confessing,*

*And making the most of so mighty a blef-
sing.*

*To the GOD he'd be grateful, but mortals
 he'd chouse,
 By making his patron preside in his house.
 And wisely foresaw, this advantage from
 thence,
 That the GOD would in honour, bear most
 of th' expence.
 So the bard he finds drink, and leaves
 PHOEBUS to treat,
 With the thoughts he inspires, regardless
 of meat.
 Hence they that come hither, expecting to
 dine,
 Are always fobb'd off with sheer-wit, and
 sheer-wine.*

My LORD, I had almost forgot to
 tell you, that those little poems produced
 a copy of verses from SWIFT, as genteel,
 and finely imagined, in his way, as any
 he ever wrote: but as I imagine they
 are published in some of the editions of
 his works, I shall not now trouble either
 you or the world with them.

The

The title was,

A P O L L O to the *D E A N*.

And they began thus.

*Right trusty, and so forth, we give you
to know,*

*That we're very ill us'd, by you mortals be-
low, &c.*

Your Lordship observes, among other parts of *S W I F T*'s character, that to his domestics he was passionate and churlish.

It must be owned he was so, my Lord, but churlish only in appearance: for he was, in truth, one of the best masters in the world. He allowed his servants board-wages, at the highest rate then known: which was four shillings a-week. And if he employed them about any thing new or extraordinary out of the ordi-
nary

nary course of their service, he always paid them, as he would any other persons, to the full value of their work: and these emoluments, with the fragments from his table, he expected should maintain them in victuals, and every thing else, but the liveries which he gave them. And if they had not frugality enough to keep within this compass, it was judged reason sufficient for discharging them.

On the other hand, as soon as they had saved a full year's wages, he constantly paid them legal interest for it; and took singular delight in seeing it accumulated to a sum, that might set them up in the world, in case he died; or they found it advisable to quit his service: which they seldom did.

Among other servants of various characters, he had a cook-maid of a large size, and very robust constitution: and such a face, as in the stile of Ladies,
would

would be termed *plain*: that is, much roughed with the small-pox, and furrowed by age.

This woman he always distinguished by the appellation of *sweet-heart*.

She happened one day to over-roast, to a great degree, the only joint he had for dinner; upon which, he sent up for her; and in a very calm tone, *sweet-heart* take this down to the kitchen, and do it less: she answered, that was impossible.

Pray, says he, if you had roasted it too little, could you have mended that fault? she said, she could with ease. Why then, *sweet-heart*, let me advise you, if you must commit a fault, commit a fault that can be mended.

Then turning to the company, he cried; You see, gentlemen, how I bear this; and yet I can assure you, this was the very thing that tried Job's patience
and

and got the better of it, when none of his other calamities could ; to wait for his victuals, as we have done, a great while, and then have them sent up to him roasted to rags.

But this was long before the outrageous reign of his passions.

I have heard the Dean often charged with ill-nature: indeed I cannot remember any one instance of that kind. But, I believe, I might recollect many of a contrary kind. I shall trouble your Lordship with one only.

A sober, well-behaved young man of his choir, going out one day a shooting, met with a very unhappy accident from his gun. As soon as SWIFT was informed of it, (which happened to be at a time when I was sitting with him) he expressed great concern: and pausing a little, well, says he, this will be a good time, at once to reward merit, and relieve

lieve distress: I will make him a Vicar: and accordingly did so in the instant.

Having mentioned his choir, I think this a proper opportunity of observing upon his conduct towards them, as Dean.

Having no skill in musick himself, he always advised with persons that had, before he preferred any man in his choir. The person he chiefly consulted with, and confided in on those occasions, was Doctor JOHN ECLIN: as compleat a man, and as fine a gentleman, as any of his age. Besides his skill in polite literature, and that of his own profession (divinity) he was highly distinguished for mathematical learning: and had a thorough knowlege and fine taste, in that branch of it, which treats of musick.

He was a person, who set (among other things excellently well done) SWIFT's celebrated *Cantata*, in a manner

ner, which nothing ever did, or can excel.

Though SWIFT had no skill in music, nor ear for its beauties; yet he had ear enough, for a most ridiculous and droll imitation of it: which sufficiently appeared from the instructions he gave about the setting of that *Cantata*: and from another accident which happened one Sunday evening, when I was present, among some other of SWIFT's friends.

TOM. ROSSENGRAVE was just then returned from Italy: and Doctor PRATT, then provost of the College, who was not long returned from thence, and was far gone in the Italian taste; had gone that morning to St. PATRICK's, to hear him play a voluntary, and was in high raptures in praise of it. Upon which, some of the company wished they had heard it; SWIFT cried out, you shall hear it this minute; I'll sing it for you. And
imme-

immediately fung out as ridiculous, and as lively an imitation of it as ever was heard: full as ridiculous as CLYNCH's * imitation of a huntsman, and a pack of hounds. Upon which, the company burst into a loud peal of laughter: all but one old gentleman, who looked serious all the time: and being asked how he could keep his countenance, very gravely answered; That he had heard Mr. ROSSENGRAVE himself, play it in the morning. An answer, which you may well imagine did not lessen the mirth. Nothing was ever more critical, or conscientious than SWIFT was, in promoting the members of his choir, according to their merits. An instance of this I had from a person present when the thing happened.

My Lady CARTERET, then in *Dublin*, applied to him for a Vicarage, in favour of a man who had been warmly recommended to her, and whom she as

* The famous CLYNCH of *Barnet*.

warmly

warmly recommended to him. His answer was;

Upon my conscience, madam, if you applied to me for a Deanery, or a Bishoprick, and it were in my power to give it, you should have it in an instant. Because those are preferments where merit is no way concerned. But in this, madam, my conscience, and my credit, interpose. For this man's merit is to be brought to the test every day. And how must I appear, either to my own conscience, or to the eye of the world, if I prefer undeserving persons to such stations! I know nothing of musick, madam; I would not give a farthing for all the musick in the universe. For my own part, I would rather say my prayers without it. But as long as it is thought by the skilful, to contribute to the dignity of the publick worship, by the blessing of God it shall never be disgraced by me: nor, I hope, by any of my successors; as long as this poor, oppres-

oppressed church of *Ireland* lasts, which I think (as things go) cannot be long.

My Lord, I intended to have taken my final leave both of you and SWIFT in this place; but find I cannot do it so soon.

I find such an impression upon my mind, as we usually feel upon the last parting with friends we love; and therefore it is natural to strive to detain them a little longer.

Besides, I think, I have something more to say of SWIFT, which your Lordship will always be glad to remember; and this is my best apology for adding another trouble to this, from, my Lord,

Your most faithful,

and most obedient, &c.

O

P O S T-

P O S T S C R I P T.

Having, in the preceding Letter, given some account of SWIFT's conduct towards his servants, I must own, to my shame, that I had almost totally forgotten to mention the monument erected to one of them, in the south isle of his cathedral, in a small piece of statuary-marble; with this inscription.

Here lieth the body of
ALEXANDER MAGEE, servant to Doctor
SWIFT, Dean of St. *Patricks*.

His grateful master caused this monument to be erected in memory of his discretion, fidelity, and diligence, in that humble station.

Ob. Mar : 24, 1721. *Etat*. 29.

This was the servant well known to all SWIFT's friends, by the name of *Saunders*; which was the appellation by which SWIFT always named him.

The

The Dean was remarkably kind to him throughout the course of several years, spent in his service; and more particularly throughout the course of a tedious illness, under which he laboured for many months before he died.

The candid reader will, I hope, forgive me, that I add this little anecdote.

In the original draught, which I saw in the Dean's own hand-writing, it stood thus---

---His grateful *Friend*, and master, &c.

A gentleman of the Dean's acquaintance, much more distinguished for vanity than wisdom, prevailed upon him to leave out the word *Friend*, and only write, *his grateful master*; and this in contradiction to a known maxim of his own; that an affec-

tionate, and faithful servant, should always be considered in the character of an *humble friend*.

Go, gentle reader, and imitate, if thou canst, the humility and gratitude of such a master.

L E T-



L E T T E R X V.

M Y L O R D,

THE indignation which always seized me upon looking into those poems of SWIFT's, which have given most offence, and apparently not without good reason: hindered me till very lately, from ever reading them over. But upon reflection, I thought it incumbent upon me, as I had in some measure taken up the character (I will not say of a critic, but of a candid observer) upon the several reflections that have been past upon him in the world: to examine, and consider more carefully, those parts of his writings, which have been most censured; and which I had before past over in disgust. And, upon the whole, the judgment that rests upon my mind, after the most candid disquisition into them, is this.

O 3

That

That they are the prescriptions of an able physician, who had, in truth, the health of his patients at heart, but laboured to attain that end, not only by strong emeticks, but also, by all the most nauseous, and offensive drugs, and potions, that could be administred. But yet not without a mixture of the finest ingredients that could possibly be imagined, and contrived, to take off the offence, which the rest so justly gave.

Give me leave to instance in two passages of his poem called STREPHON and CLOE.

The first is as follows,

*Fair decency, celestial maid,
Descend from heav'n, to beauty's aid,
Tho' beauty may beget desire,
'Tis thou must fan the lover's fire :
For beauty, like supreme dominion,
Is best supported by opinion :
If decency bring no supplies,
Opinion falls, and beauty dies.*

The

The next is in the eight concluding lines of the same poem.

*On sense and wit your passions found,
By decency cemented round,
Let prudence with good-nature strive,
To keep esteem, and love alive.
Then come old age when e'er it will,
Your friendship shall continue still:
And thus a mutual gentle fire,
Shall never, but with life, expire.*

Although many other parts of this poem will be read with pain; these, I think, and some others, must always be remembred with pleasure and profit: and must be considered under the character of such medicines, as not only tend to remove the distemper in his patients, and strengthen their constitutions against them, for the future; but also, as preventives, plague-water, and other anti-pestilential prescriptions (by Physicians called alexipharmacks) to guard others from the infection.

My Lord, if I remember rightly, you have very judiciously observed, upon SWIFT's great attention to the œconomy of his cathedral; insomuch, that he would not suffer a shilling of it to be alienated from its proper use; even for the purposes of charity. If any thing of that kind was proposed, his answer was, that this money was appropriated; but he would give out of his own pocket, in proportion to his income, as much towards any charitable purpose as any of them would, in proportion to theirs. Then turning to the person that made the proposal.

You Sir, declare upon your conscience, that the person you now desire to be relieved, is a proper object of christian charity. My Deanery is worth seven hundred pounds a year; your Prebend worth two; if you will give two shillings to this charity I will give seven; or any greater sum in the same proportion.

His

His attention to the repairs of his cathedral was very remarkable; and, I believe, it will be found, upon enquiry, that greater sums have been applied to the solid support, preservation and ornament of that cathedral, in his time, than in any preceding period, from its building.

The truth is, my Lord, honesty always was conspicuous, and predominant in his whole conduct; and he carried it even to the article of conversation; in which, he thought, every man had as much right to his share, as he had in any other commerce, or transaction of life. As much as he had to his share of the victuals at the table. And this he hath illustrated in that fine part of the poem *to a Lady, who desired him to write verses on her, in the heroic stile.*

*You must learn, if you would gain us,
With good sense to entertain us.*

Scholars,

*Scholars, when good sense describing,
 Call it tasting and imbibing.
 Metaphoric meat and drink,
 Is to understand and think.
 We may carve for others thus,
 And let others carve for us.
 To discourse and to attend,
 Is to help yourself and friend.
 Conversation is but carving :
 Carve to all, yourself are starving.
 Give no more to every guest
 Than he's able to digest.
 Give him always of the prime ;
 And but little at a time.
 Carve to all but just enough,
 Let them neither starve nor stuff.
 And that you may have your due,
 Let your neighbours carve for you.*

And I am told that he hath complained of the avarice, and monopoly of others, in that article, particularly of Mr. PRIOR. And that being asked, if he did not think Mr. PRIOR a very good com-

companion, he answered, He would certainly be a very good companion if he were a fair one. *But he leaves no elbow room for others.*

SWIFT's own conduct was strictly conformable to this maxim of his own.

I never speak more than one minute at a time, and when that is done, I wait at least as long for others, to take up the conversation: but if they do not think fit to do so, I then have a right to begin again.

After honesty, charity, I think, took up the next place in his heart. And that of his lending out a large sum of money in small portions, to honest, industrious, and necessitous tradesmen, was very conspicuous. He lent it out at a very small interest; and such as barely sufficed for a very moderate maintenance, or rather gratuity, to the person who kept the account of the disbursements and weekly payments.

These

These payments he expected should be made out of the weekly profits of their trade, till the whole was repaid, within the compass of fifty weeks----This, my Lord, will, I believe, be allowed one of the most christian, social, and well-judged charities, that ever was devised.

It hath been, indeed, objected to it, that it was calculated to keep up his popularity with the weavers! but this, to my certain knowlege, is utterly false. For it was equally open to every other trade in the city: and required no other recommendation, than that of an honest, and necessitous industry.

I have often wondered at SWIFT's being charged with irreligion; when he hath left so many clear proofs of the contrary behind him; some of those I have already mentioned, and might mention many more. But that of his birth-day ode to STELLA, 1726-7, abundantly

dantly supercedes the necessity of any other proof, of his true christian belief.

Even you, my Lord, have hinted that an idle passage in the voyage to *Lilliput*, glanced at the resurrection.

I have, considered it seriously; and can only number it among those wild singularities, with which he hath taken more than sufficient pains, to furnish those imaginary, and unimportant travels!

I have often wondered, why great wits have so often given offence upon the article of religion; and am of opinion that a friend of mine hath hit upon the true cause. His reasoning was thus.

Wits, he said, were that denomination of men, which of all others most needed the constant use of the Lord's-Prayer, because they were much more in the power of temptation, than any others.

Wit, he said, loved to be seen, as much as beauty. Is that talent which
delights

delights above all others, to vaunt itself; and seeks out for itself more occasions of doing so, than any other. It is a quick-fighted faculty, which finds out allusions and resemblances of things, seemingly most distant and unlike: and when it hath found them out, its greatest delight is to shew them: and therefore can seldom resist the pride, and pleasure of doing so; be the subject what it will, or the occasions never so improper.

The faculty of wit, is to find likenesses, not discern differences.

I shall trouble your Lordship, but with two other particularities relating to SWIFT.

One was, his singular attention to the style of every man that preached in his church.

As soon as any one got up into the pulpit, he pulled out his pencil, and a piece

piece of paper, and carefully noted every wrong pronounciation, or expreffion, that fell from him. Whether too hard, or ſcholaſtic (and of conſequence, not ſufficiently intelligible to a vulgar hearer) or ſuch as he deemed, in any degree, improper, indecent, ſlovenly, or mean; and thoſe, he never failed, to admoniſh the preacher of, as ſoon as he came into the chapter-houſe. A conduct which I believe, you, my Lord, will judge of, as I do: and conclude, it muſt be of great conſequence to all the preachers that came within his reach; eſpecially the younger ſort.

The other point, I beg leave to mention, was his ſtrict, religious attention to the revenues of his Deanery, for the benefit of his ſucceſſors. Inſomuch that he never failed to ſacrifice his own preſent emoluments, to the reaſonable proſpects of a future, ſufficient maintenance for them: which you alſo have taken notice of: yet let me add, that one inſtance
of

of this appeared most remarkably in the great decline, and almost total decay of his understanding.

He had resolved, many years before, never to renew a certain lease of lands belonging to the Deanery, without raising the rent thirty pounds a year.

The tenant had often applied to him for a renewal upon other terms; but to no purpose. And finding now, that SWIFT's understanding was in the decay; and his avarice remarkably predominant; he thought this the proper season to make his last effort, for a renewal; and tempt him with a fine: a temptation, which he was sure the Dean could not resist in those circumstances.

Accordingly he made his attempt; but to as little purpose as ever he had done before: the Dean was immovable. He refused a large fine at a time when he loved money, incomparably beyond
any

any thing else in this world! and raised the rent, as he had long since resolved to do.

Two things are, I think, well worth our observation upon this conduct.

The first is, the uprightness, and integrity, and steadiness of his resolutions: which being once rightly fixed, could never be removed: not even when his understanding had almost totally failed him.

I visited him the next day after the renewal of this lease. And enquiring after his health, he told me (in a tone of heavy complaint) that his memory was almost totally gone, and his understanding going: But that he had yesterday done something for the benefit of his successor, he had forgot what; but Doctor WILSON (who then lived in the house with him) would tell me. I enquired, and was informed of this renewal, as I have now related it.

P

The

The next thing worth our observation, upon this point, is the wisdom of that remarkable instinct with which God hath endowed the human kind! generally considered only as an obstinacy inherent to old age: but, in truth, a most noble and guardian instinct, that will not let us change those resolutions and principles, in the decline of our understandings, which were formed and fixed in its full strength.

I have no more to add, but that I am, my Lord, with very great regard, and strict truth,

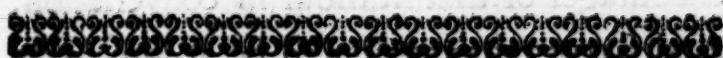
Your LORDSHIP'S

most faithful,

and most obedient

bumble servant, &c.

L E T-



LETTER, XVI.

MY LORD,

I Shall but too probably incur, what I should be much concerned for, some degree of your contempt for descending to such *Minutiæ* as that of SWIFT's punning. A talent, which he was wont to say, no man ever despised that excelled in it.

I shall venture however, in hopes of forgiveness in some of your less serious hours; and in full confidence of a safe protection from PLUTARCH.

SWIFT had great quickness and felicity that way, and the old Earl of PEMBROKE, then Lord Lieutenant of *Ireland* (a man too great and good to be added as a seventh to the usurers, and murderers of

SWIFT's *sextum virate* *) was a great encourager of that humour in conversation. And SWIFT happening to be at the castle one day when a learned physician was reading a long lecture to his excellency, upon the nature and qualities of bees, calling them on every occasion, a nation, and a common-wealth; yes, my Lord, says SWIFT, they are a very ancient nation. You know, my Lord, MOSES takes notice of them; he numbers the *Hivites* among those nations which *Joshua* was appointed to conquer.

At another time, being in a company, where a lady whisking about her long train (long trains were then in fashion)

* The greatest benefactor to *Ireland*, the greatest encourager of learning, and greatest example of true generosity and christian piety, that this country hath exhibited there, at least within the compass of this century. He made a progress through the kingdom to learn its true condition. And besides many other instances of munificence, he left five pounds to the poor of the parish, wherever he dined, and ten pounds wherever he lay. And I am well assured, beyond all possibility of doubt, that he gave 2000*l.* in charity (in his progress towards *Ireland*) between *London* and *Hollyhead*.

swept

swept down a fine fiddle, and broke it;
SWIFT cried out,

*Mantua ve miseræ nimium vicina cre-
monæ.*

I could recount others, but I chuse rather to check my own disposition, than any longer run the risque of offending yours.

Give me leave to remove from his puns, to some particularities of his conversation and manners.

I observed in some former Letter on SWIFT's behaviour to his servants: it may not perhaps be unacceptable to mention something of his manner of hiring them.

Humility was always the test by which he tried them. Among other questions, he always asked, Whether they understood the cleaning of shoes. Whether they answered, that they did, or did not; he always added, my kitchen-

wench hath a scullion, that does her drudgery, one constant business of my groom, and footman, is to clean her shoes by turns.

If they stomached this, he instantly turned them off; but if they humbly submitted he gave them farther hearing (by the way his cook was his kitchen-wench.)

The stile of his conversation was very much of a piece with that of his writings; concise, and clear, and strong.

Being one day at a sheriff's feast, who among other toasts called out to him, Mr. Dean, *the trade of Ireland*. He answered quick; *Sir, I drink no memories.*

Hearing some people wonder, why there were so many Jacobites in *England*, not long after the late King's accession, and being asked, What he thought could be the reason; he answered, The ministers

nifters might thank themselves. *When I find myself in pain, as I lie upon my right side, I naturally turn to my left; though I have no prospect of being better there; but perhaps worse.*

He was a mortal enemy to armies. And it appears plainly from his project for the advancement of religion, that his opinion of the vices, ignorance, and irreligion then reigning amongst them, made him so. I have heard, and hope that things are since mended. He held their *Cant of honour* (as he called it) in the utmost contempt; as you have shewn in a quotation from him. And whenever he heard that any one of them (or indeed any other) was killed in a duel, he asked, what was become of the other, is not he killed too. If they told him he was not, he answered, I'm sorry for it---those quarrellom wretches are the pest of society. The best thing they can do in this world is to cut one anothers throats as fast as they can.

He greatly admired the talents of the late Duke of WHARTON (as the Duke did his) who one day dining with the Dean, and recounting several wild frolicks he had run thro'; You have had your frolicks, my Lord, says the Dean. My Lord, let me recommend one more to you; take a frolick to be virtuous; take my word for it, that one will do you more honour than all the other frolicks of your whole life.

The Duke thanked him, and protested he would; but was too much used to forget his promises.

An incident happened at a visitation at *Trim*, which shewed that SWIFT had great talents for speaking.

The Bishop had reflected with some roughness (which the Dean considered as rudeness) upon one of his clergy. The Dean took no notice of it at that time; but

but the next day being at a fynod, when all the clergy had a right to speak as well as the Bishop. The Dean took notice of the treatment which his Lordship had given to one of his brethren the day before; and rebuked the Bishop, apparently, in the most gentle and respectful manner, and with great coolness of temper; but at the same time, with as much severity, and fine satire, and in one of the finest speeches that ever was uttered, as I have been assured by a good judge then present.

If this talent was discerned in him by men in power, it was possibly one reason why he never was raised to the house of Lords.

It is certain, that the general contempt he had for mankind, would have given him great advantages in speaking in public, he would have easily been governed by that advice said to be given by SOCRATES to ALCIBIADES; to consider

sider all his hearers as so many cabbage-stalks.

Your Lordship hath observed that his spirit of politicks was confined within his own breast for many years.

The truth is he considered *Ireland* as a scene too little for his genius, and when he had attained to the height of *Irish* esteem and applause, for his *Drapier's* Letters; I have often heard him wish, that another person, who he thought pretended to some rivalry in wit with him, had been the author of them. The praise which attended those little performances, he said, would make that gentleman very happy.

Your Lordship hath also observed of him, that he told a story admirably well. He did so. And let me add, that the most effectual way of paying court to him, was to listen with attention; altho' he sometimes told them too often.

One

One day in company with Doctor HELSHAM, who seemed to be somewhat absent when the Dean was speaking, he stopt short, and cried out; I'd give fifty pounds that you were as good a listner as Doctor DELANY.

His wit was, for the most part, founded upon good sense; which intitled him to the character of my Lord BACON, strong in the chace and nimble in the turn.

Happening to be in company with a petulant young man who prided himself in saying pert things to the Dean. And at last getting up with some conceited jesticulations, cried out, You must know, Mr. Dean, that I set up for a wit. Do you so, says the Dean, then take my advice, and sit down again.

A gentleman who professed a great esteem for the Dean, nevertheless took the first opportunity to do him the worst
office

office that an enemy could do: and the moment he had done it, sent a common friend to make an apology to the Dean, and desire the continuance of his friendship.

The friend applied himself accordingly; but when he found that all his colourable excuses had no weight, he then pointed his finger to his forehead. *You know, Sir, our poor friend is sometimes a little disordered here.*

I know, said the Dean, in a very grave serious accent, that he is a madman. And if that were all, no man living could commiserate his condition more than myself. But, Sir, he is a madman, possessed by the devil---I renounce him.

Being one day at a visitation-dinner, a clergyman, who valued himself more upon his wit than he ought: and often mistook a rough kind of abuse for keen rallery, took it in his head to exercise his talents upon the Dean, and did so
very

very licentiously. The Dean heard him as calmly as if he had not heard him: not taking the least notice, nor making any kind of answer to any thing that he said. At length, the Bishop interposed, and checked the petulance of the snarl: (for that was the name he was known by).

The Dean immediately got up, and begged that no restraint might be laid upon the gentleman. *MOMUS, my Lord, was always admitted to the feasts of the Gods, and privileged to say what he pleased there.*

Having begun this Letter with a defence of one of SWIFT's levities, his punning. I must beg leave to conclude it with the defence of another, his riddles.

SWIFT composing riddles, you tell us, is TITIAN painting draft-boards. Which must have been inexcusable, while there remained a sign-post painter in the world.

With

With great submission, my Lord, this is a very great mistake. A riddle may be as fine painting as any other in the world. It requires as strong an imagination, as fine colouring, and as exact a proportion, and keeping, as any other historical painting. The only difference is, (and that surely is difference enough) that it is not always employed upon subjects, so interesting and important. And yet SWIFT hath made his *Petbox the Great*, a piece truly historical and learned; with as many fine and strong strokes of satire as in any of HOGARTH'S. I only wish, the subject had been less disagreeable, and the colouring in some places, less strong.

Riddles, my Lord, are not the daub of dulness; they are strictly and properly the play of wit: as innocent, mirthful and inoffensive, as any other play (but perhaps too youthful in some characters) and may, for ought I know, like some exercises in the academy, contribute not
only

only to recreation, but also to health and strength, and be proper preparatives to serious and important action.

From argument, let us proceed to authority. And, I think, we need seek for no higher than that of SWIFT's master, BUTLER. Whose description of the enchanted castle, *Canto 2. part 1.* is, to all intents and purposes, as much a riddle, as any in SWIFT's works. And yet was never deemed a despicable part of BUTLER's.

*Thus grave and solemn, they march on,
Until quite thro' the town they had gone.
At further end of which there stands,
An ancient castle, that commands
Th' adjacent parts; in all the fabrick,
You shall not see one stone, nor a brick.
But all of wood, by powerful spell,
Of magic, made impregnable.
There's neither iron-bar nor gate,
Port-cullis, chain, nor bolt, nor grate.*

And

*And yet men durance there abide,
 In dungeon, scarce three inches wide;
 With roof so low, that under it,
 They never stand, but lie, or sit.
 And yet so foul, that who'so is in,
 Is to the middle leg in prison.
 In circle magical confin'd,
 With walls of subtle air and wind.
 Which none are able to break thorough,
 Until they are freed by head of borough.*

I need not tell your Lordship, though possibly it may be information to some few of my readers, that modern riddles have succeeded to the ænigmas of the ancients: and are, indeed, the same thing, under another form. But with this difference, that they are now the play of wit, as they were then deemed the work of wisdom.

There is an instance of this kind in the author now quoted, *Canto* 1. part 2. which I call an astronomical ænigma: and perhaps as fine in its kind as ever was invented, or imagined.

The

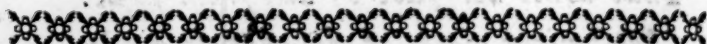
*The moon pull'd of her vail of light,
That hides her face by day from sight.
(Mysterious vail, of brightness made,
That's both her lustre, and her shade)
And in the night as freely shone,
As if her rays had been her own.*

And here, my Lord, I leave you
to enjoy her, like *Endimion*, in all her
beauty. And am,

Your most faithful, &c.

Q

LET.



L E T T E R XVII.

MY LORD,

HAVING taken upon me in the preceding Letter, to object to your seemingly too contemptuous censure of SWIFT's lighter and less important productions and amusements; it would ill become the character I have taken, wholly to pass by unnoticed, your severer censures upon him, and not him alone.

I shall recount some of the passages as they occur to me in your Letters: and either take such notice of them as may not, I hope, misbecome me, or leave them to be re-considered by your Lordship, in your more serious and retired hours. Pardon me, if I add, your hours of humiliation.

In

In your seventh Letter, p. 78, you compare his works to a Chaos, and then add, "and yet the incoherency of situation is, perhaps, one of the most excusable faults in the collection. For the materials are of so different, and so incongruous a nature, that it seems as if the author (who was in reality the editor) imagined the publick under an absolute necessity of accepting the basest coin from the same hand that had exhibited the purest."

My Lord, when you shall please to consider seriously, that the basest coin consists either of lead or brass, or both united, you will perhaps conclude, that this heavy censure (I dare not call it abuse) would less misbecome the pen of a----or a---- than the name, character, and politeness (hereditary politeness) of the noble translator of PLINY.

The censure of another nobleman, not less celebrated either for parts or politeness

politeness, was much more tender: hearing this collection of SWIFT's works censured, as containing a great deal of stuff in it: he answered, *there is indeed some stuff in it, but it is SWIFT's stuff.*

But, supposing some of his pieces to be, what you are pleased to call them, some of the basest coin; pray, my Lord, does nothing give coin its value but the materials of which it is made: supposing the cast to have a strong resemblance of the original; is that question *whose image and superscription bath it* of no moment in this case? Does the masterly die, and fine impression and polish, add no value to it? doubtless they do, my Lord; they add that kind of medalick value by which we rate some ancient coins: not at all regarding the intrinsic worth of the materials.

Whereas, other coins of the same intrinsic value, become quickly contemptible for want of those advantages: and
are

are considered only as so many clumsy and barbarous masses of inert, unformed or (what is worse) ill-formed matter.

In the same Letter, p. 82, you compare the friendship of SWIFT and SHERIDAN to that of THESEUS and PIRITHOUS: you add, indeed, "but the
" friendship that cemented the two ancient
" heroes, probably commenced from motives very different from those which
" united the two modern divines."

I heartily wish, my Lord, you had been a little more explicit, and had more distinctly acquitted them, at least of those monstrous enormities which cemented those celebrated heroes.

I will presume to say, my Lord, that such a clearing would not be less for their honour than your own: as it must always be your interest to have your thoughts seen in their true and genuine light.

In your Letter 12, whenever you think proper to publish a new edition

of your works, I have good hopes, or rather am confident, that your moral turn of mind will make you leave out every thing that hath the least appearance of a panegyrick upon vice.

Letter 13. p. 139, you have this expression. *After a hint from GULLIVER, that we have lost the Greek Idiom.*

My Lord, GULLIVER only says, *it was with great difficulty that I understood his Greek.*

This difficulty, my Lord, I apprehend arose only from a pronunciation, very different from ours. For that SWIFT thought the language continued the same, from HOMER to PLUTARCH (as undoubtedly it did) is clear from his Letter to my Lord OXFORD, for correcting, &c. the *English* tongue.

My Lord, your thorough contemptuous treatment of ARISTOTLE, would greatly surprise me, if it were less fashionable.

Mr.

Mr. POPE, of whom it is not clear that he ever read one line in him (his employments and amusements having naturally led him into different pursuits) hath yet taken upon him to satirise the *University*, as a den of dunces, for their esteem of him. Considering them as so many Oxen or rather, *fat bulls of basan*, on that account.

*A hundred head of ARISTOTLE'S
friends----* Dunciad.

I heartily wish he could make his words good: for surely nothing could do that learned body more honour than a high esteem for one of the greatest genius's that ever God sent into the world, or blest it with: as the best criticks, both ancient and modern, most undoubtedly allow him to be.

The perfecter of logick and rhetoric (two amazing efforts and effects of
Q 4 the

the human abilities) which, if they were well studied and understood, would secure the world from so many superficial smatterers in reasoning, and praters in public; as now infest it: to say nothing of his noble treatises of ethics, politicks, poeticks, and natural history: all the most correct and excellent in their kind, that antiquity hath conveyed to us: and all in a style of a most masterly clearness and conciseness. And indeed considering the great improvements, and discoveries he made in all parts of learning, his master PLATO was well justified in stiling him by that peculiar, and most honourable appellation; *the philosopher of truth*. And must all these be not only discarded, but villified, on account of some errors in natural philosophy, which wanted a BACON to point out, and a BOYLE and NEWTON to correct. Indeed, my Lord, I should deem it no very hardy adventure to pronounce, that if ARISTOTLE had been coeval with those great men, it would

would have been their highest glory to have out-gone so great a rival.

I own, my Lord, I am greatly concerned to see your Lordship give the least countenance to that antiquated and idle common place calumny; of his quoting no author but to censure him. Supposing this truth, my Lord, his business was to correct the errors of all that went before him: but in fact it is not true; for he quotes PLATO more than once to commend him: and where he finds himself obliged to censure his errors, he does it without mentioning their author.

Less justifiable still is the charge of his having destroyed the writings of those that went before him; inasmuch as they were undoubtedly extant some hundreds of years after in the time of CICERO.

The truth is, that those writings becoming useless from the time that his
(ARIS-

(ARISTOTLE'S) works were known, they quickly became contemptible; and so perished of course.

But supposing him intitled to no merit but that of collecting and preserving the works of HOMER; and presenting that most correct, and noble copy of them to his pupil ALEXANDER, which that prince laid up in the richest casket, among the spoils of DARIUS; and deposited nightly under his pillow. Supposing ARISTOTLE intitled to no other merit, yet, methinks, this might have gained him a little more respect than either SWIFT or you have thought fit to pay him.

The next thing that appeared to me exceptionable in the work before us is, in Letter 14. p. 164. and, on reflection, I think it can only be an error of the press: where instead of *greatest miseries*, we should have read,---*greatest earthly miseries*.

Letter

Letter 15. p. 169, are these words, *Virtue acts with the utmost generosity, and with no view to her own advantage; while vice, like a glutton, feeds herself enormously; and then is willing to disgorge, the nauseous offals of her feast.*

Pray, my Lord, must not virtue feed at all, because vice feeds enormously? I am sorry to think that this observation seems to have some resemblance to those ill-founded refinements too often met with in the writings of Lord SHAFTSBURY and his followers: which are abundantly exposed and refuted in those most truly polite, and classical criticisms of Mr. BROWN, in his *essays*, on the *characteristics*. A work, which if you have not yet met with, I will venture to pronounce, will give you as high, as elegant, and as salutary an entertainment, as any production of this age.

In

In your 16th Letter, p. 179, you tell us, " that SWIFT could never be induced to take fines for any of the chapter lands. He always chose to raise the rents, as the method least oppressive to the present tenant, and most advantageous to all future tenants, and landlords."

Here, my Lord, I must take leave to assure you, you are much misinformed. He knew the true interest of the chapter too well, and had too much concern for it, not to secure the rents to it, by a moderate fine; equally advantageous, both to the landlord and tenant: whom, though he sometimes raised in his rent, he never racked.

As unreasonable as it might be, to expect any production of the present times, without some lash upon the clergy; the zest of all the present, polite entertainments of taste, offered to the publick!

yet

yet I really hoped, I should find no-
 thing of that kind, from a man of your
 genius, politeness, and religious turn of
 mind. Or at least, if any priesthood that
 came in your way, deserved the lash,
 I hoped at least, you would make a
 clear distinction, between the deserving
 and undeserving; but what is matter of
 much heavier complaint, I find, with
 equal amazement and affliction, that the
 sacred writings themselves, have found
 less reverence from you, than the persons
 of the popular tribunes met with, in the
 roman republick. I must take the liberty,
 to transcribe at large, from the pages
 254, 255

“ It is not improbable, that madness
 “ has been coeval with mankind. There
 “ have certainly been many instances
 “ of it among the *Greeks* and *Romans*.
 “ Among the *Jews*, the enthusiastic fury
 “ of SAUL, is equally remarkable with
 “ the ecstatic rage of NEBUCHADNEZ-
 “ EAR ! nor have any parts of the world,
 “ I

" I believe, entirely escaped this raging
 " evil. It was frequently taken for in-
 " spiration; and the prophetic Sybils were
 " obliged to put on the airs and looks of
 " madness, to obtain an implicit belief to
 " their prophecies. From these sacerdotai
 " impositions, mad people reaped some
 " remarkable advantages. They were
 " often looked upon as messengers sent
 " by heaven, to declare the will of the
 " Gods, and the prophetical decrees of
 " fate. They were revered as persons
 " sacred, and divine: and instead of
 " scourges, they received tokens of ado-
 " ration. In how great a degree must
 " the subtilty of priests have prevailed,
 " when they could make one of the
 " greatest curses that attend human
 " life, appear one of the greatest blef-
 " sings."

Believe me, my Lord, I never found
 myself more embarrassed, than I am at
 this moment, how to defend the sacred
 scriptures from the charge, seemingly
 implied

implied, (tho' I never can believe it was really intended) in this account you are pleased to give of SAUL's enthusiastic fury.

If by that expression you mean the influence of what the scripture calls, *an evil spirit from God*; I think it were much better to adhere to the scripture expression. Nor do I think we can be justified either in swerving from it, or interpreting it of madness of any kind: and much less can we so interpret the influence he was under, when he went in pursuit of DAVID to *Ramah*. For what account do the scriptures give of this extraordinary event? My Lord, the account is as follows,---SAUL sent several messengers, one after another, in pursuit of DAVID; who no sooner came into the presence of SAMUEL at the head of his prophets, but they were arrested there by the sacred influence of the spirit of God-----His thirst of revenge then urged him to go himself in pursuit of
DAVID

DAVID to *Naioth* in *Ramah*; where the text informs us, that *the spirit of God was upon him also; and he went on and prophesied, &c.*

My Lord, I am so averse from the thoughts of censuring the account you give of SAUL's enthusiastic madness, that I am more inclined to conclude, that I am fallen under some unhappy delusion in relation to it. But how I can be delivered from it you only can devise, and inform me.

The plainest account that I have met with, in relation to this transaction, is in a book intitled, "An Historical Account of the Life of DAVID. *Book i. Chap. 10. p. 95--96*; no sooner did he (SAUL) learn that DAVID was at *Naioth*, but he immediately sent messengers to take him. They went; and when they arrived, they found the sacred assembly under the immediate influence of the spirit of God; proph-

" prophesying, and S A M U E L presiding
 " over them: and to convince that infidel
 " tribe, that these prophesyings were no
 " fanatic delusions, or efforts of enthu-
 " siasm, they themselves were seized with
 " the same sacred influence, and pro-
 " phesied also. And when this was told
 " S A U L, he sent other messengers again;
 " and they also were subdued by the same
 " spirit of God. At last he went him-
 " self, enquiring as he went on, where
 " S A M U E L and D A V I D were. And being
 " informed, at the great well at *Sechu*
 " (where there was a great resort of per-
 " sons to draw water) that they were at
 " *Naioth* in *Ramah*, he pressed forward
 " in quest of them: and as he proceeded,
 " God, to shew that his power is neither
 " confined to place nor persons, that the
 " prophesyings at *Naioth* were owing to
 " no influence of example, to no intoxica-
 " ting vapors or temperature of the air
 " (as was suspected of some of the ora-
 " cles of old) seized him also, with his
 " sacred influence, long before he reached

R

" *Naioth*,

" *Naieth*, and conducted him under it
 " to the assembly of the prophets:
 " where, forgetting his bloody purpose,
 " he put off his robes of royalty, and
 " military apparatus, and prophesied in
 " the presence of SAMUEL: and con-
 " tinued under a very distinguished influ-
 " ence of the spirit of God that whole
 " day and night. He lay down naked,
 " (says the text) in the same sense that
 " TACITUS calls the *Germans* naked.
 " *Rejēcta veste superiore.* (When they
 " had thrown off their upper garment)
 " which now gave new occasion to the
 " repetition of that proverbial taunt against
 " him, *Is SAUL also among the prophets.*"

As little, are you, my Lord, (in my
 humble opinion) justified in interpreting
 that most signal and divine chastisement
 of pride, in the person of NEBUCHAD-
 NEZZAR, by the expression of *ecstatic*
rage: to me, my Lord, the humiliation
 of that great king under the hand of God,
 upon the return of his reason, of which
 heaven

heaven had before so signally and judicially deprived him for his pride, falls under another character, and is one of the finest, most humbling, and most instructive lessons to the human vanity, that ever was exhibited to it, from the foundation of the world.

The account which you have been pleased to give of the *Sybils*, I am no way concerned, either to refute, or defend: I only wish that you had pleased to have taken that occasion to make some observations in favour of the christian religion; at least that part of it established in your own country; where such delusions are not only not practised, but held in the utmost and avowed detestation by the whole priesthood.

As to the advantages which you tell us mad people received from those sacerdotal impositions, viz. their being looked upon as messengers from heaven, &c. I own my utter ignorance upon that

head; having never, that I know of, met with any account of any such privileges and advantages of madness, except among the *Turks*: and here also, methinks, your christian spirit might have called upon you to make some distinction in favour of the priests of your own religion, even though it were utterly abhorrent from the fashion of the present times to do so. But fashion, I find, is an universal tyrant, which few have the disposition, and fewer the fortitude, to disobey, even in favour of truth.

Upon the whole, my Lord, I am exceedingly sorry (as the whole world are surpris'd) to find your spirit so strongly warped to a general (I don't say or mean an universal) contempt of SWIFT's works: you had else found (give me leave to tell you) in every one of his volumes; something, which, (although wholly past by as unworthy your notice) it might yet no way misbecome either your judgment or your taste to have distinguished with a friendly,

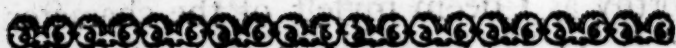
friendly, if not with a fond eye; unworthy as I deem myself of the character of an able critic; yet had I perused your Remarks with the same disposition to object, your abuse of the kings of *Judah* would be found not the only exceptionable part in your work, past by uncensured.

Let me conclude, with humbly beseeching you to review once more the eight volumes of SWIFT's works, with your native candour; which, if you do, I am much mistaken, if you do not find in them a good deal past by as insignificant, or worse, which a fair critic might endure; and a candid one commend: nay something which the best judges might applaud without reproach, either to their taste or discernment. Nay more,---something to honour, with as high a respect, as that wherewith I am, my LORD,

Your most faithful, &c.

R 3

L E T-



L E T T E R XVIII.

MY LORD,

I Was in hopes, upon the conclusion of my last Letter, that I should be called upon no more, throughout the remaining part of your remarks, to complain of your hard treatment to your friend SWIFT: and to shew how little I am disposed to complaint, I shall pass by your comment upon his sixth volume uncensured: although by no means approved, or assented to. And passing over the seventh, in the same manner, proceed to the eighth: where, having made some slight observations upon two or three treatises contained in it, you tell us, " That the remainder of this volume " is like a garden over-run with Docks " and Thistles; among which some Rose- " trees accidentally make their appear-
" ance;

"ance; and more particularly in some
"sermons that are curious, &c."

My Lord, I have happened, of late,
to have passed more time than usual, in
the company of some curious botanists,
who will hardly allow that there is such a
thing as a weed in the world. I can't
say, but after enumerating many valuable
properties, and salutary qualities in the
several species, as of Docks, they did
allow that they might be numbered
among what the vulgar call weeds: but
to call a Thistle so, they said, was not
only an high indignity against a great and
wise nation, who made choice of it as
the properest emblem of their power,
and majesty; but also a confessed heresy
against the sacred science of botany, from
SOLOMON to MITHRIDATES; and from
MITHRIDATES to MATTHIOLUS.

The poets, it is well known, place
APOLLO at their head; and it is as well
known that APOLLO was the first

botanist of his day; and yet could he (with all his divinity) never find any higher reward for the most deserving of his sons, than a crown of bays, or ivy.

The several trees and vegetables in APOLLO's gardens, were sacred to the several characters and endowments of the poets: from the Oak to the Myrtle: and from the Rose to the Thistle. The first of which was, the emblem of soft, or love-satire; and the last, of the angry and severe. And how properly it was so, my instructors plainly shewed me, by displaying a fine draft of a Thistle, coloured, and diversified in all its beauty, parts, and proportions: and then turning to a poem of SWIFT's, volume the eighth, which you have not thought worth your notice; they desired me to compare them, and then confess the strong and beautiful resemblance throughout. Nay one of the company, who was blest with a more than ordinary quick, poetick (or perhaps second) sight; insisted

insisted upon it, that the words *NOLI ME TANGERE* encircled that poem, in as strong and clear capitals, as any green ribbon ever gloried in: and bad me see if it did not. I tried; and whether blinded by a strong delusion, I can't say; but I imagined I saw it (at least in a figure) and found myself quickly obliged to own the justice, and propriety of the comparison: and being once convinced upon that head, I fully acquitted your Lordship of any indignity done to SWIFT, by the comparison of some of his poems to a vegetable, of such distinguished dignity and beauty. The stem ending in a rich purple flowered tassel not unressembling a crown resting (as crowns are sometimes said to do) upon a thorny cushion; and fenced with long and well-armed leaves, gashed on either side like a band of hardy veterans.

But, my Lord, what shall I say to your similitude of *four small beer*, to which you compare some of SWIFT's works?

works? unless it be, that the wit of the comparison hath betrayed you (as wit too often doth) into a rash and most unjustifiable debasement of SWIFT's genius. Nor do I know what other defence to plead against it, but that of the wine-merchant, who when an evil report had gone out of his cellar as abounding with sophisticated liquors; invited the whole world to try and taste for themselves; and if, says he, you find any thing in my whole parcel, worse than the purest white wine vinegar, (a little mothered perhaps now and then) I am content to forfeit the whole.

To begin (by way of sample) with the preface introductory to these pieces; more particularly the confession of the beasts.

I have (says he) been long of opinion, that there is not a more general and greater mistake, or of worse consequence through the commerce of mankind, than the wrong judgments they are apt to entertain of their own talents. And when he hath
instanced

instanced in coxcombs of various kinds, he proceedeth as follows. *I compute that London hath eleven native fools of the beau and puppy kind, for one among us in Dublin; besides, two-thirds of ours are transplanted thither, who are now naturalized, whereby that overgrown capital exceeds ours, in the article of dunces, by forty to one, and what is more to our further mortification; there is not one distinguished fool of Irish birth or education, who makes any noise in that famous metropolis, unless the London prints be very partial or defective: whereas, London is seldom without a dozen of their own educating, who engross the vogue for half a winter together, and are never heard of more, but give place to a new set. This hath been the constant progress for at least thirty years past, only allowing for the change of breed and fashion.*

I appeal to you, my Lord, is this four small beer? is it not rather sparkling Champain?

You

You are pleased to say that many of the remaining pieces are spurious. Not one, my Lord, that I can find. There is not one that pretends to be his, which is not so; unless perhaps that sermon upon knowing ones self; to which you object; and which, I own, is not equal to the rest. And yet there are some strokes in it, which seem so characteristic to SWIFT, as make them hardly possible to be mistaken; I shall instance but in one.

“And now to shew, that the heart
 “hath given him a false report of the
 “temptation: we learn from this, that
 “the same weak man would resist and
 “master the same powerful temptation,
 “upon considerations of infinitely less
 “value than those which religion offers.
 “Nay, such vile considerations, that the
 “grace of God cannot, without blas-
 “phemy, be supposed to add any man-
 “ner of force and efficacy to them.”

I pass over every thing else in this
 volume

volume not already noticed, or quoted for their excellence; except two letters, one to Lord PALMERSTON, and the other to Mrs. MOORE: both in their kind as masterly as any other productions of SWIFT's pen, without exception; and which therefore, I am amazed, how you could overlook. Friendship, my Lord, if I may be indulged in so low an image, is the bias, which, rightly directed, carries us nearest to the Jack; which we do not always reach so advantageously by a direct progression, as by taking a compass. And where we fall short of the object we aim at, yet we always wish to protect it; and often do, even in that situation: but where this bias is either ill-directed or wrong-turned, it carries us away just so much further from our intended aim and end.

Give me leave to tell you, my Lord, that how friendly soever your intentions may have been, your green-keepers, and ground-givers, have given very wrong
directions

directions to your bias: and you have left your object as open to the attacks of the adversaries, as if you yourself had been one of them.

When nothing but the name of zeal appears.

'Twixt our best actions and the worst of theirs.

My Lord, I have long found myself embarrassed, how to account for the different conceptions of two friends to the same author, concerning the merits of the same works; and have at last, I think, after many repeated reflections, hit upon the true cause.

I think, my Lord, although I presume not to claim any equality of abilities with you; yet the great inequality of our judgements upon this head, cannot arise so much from that point, as from the great difference of our situation and circumstances.

You,

You, my Lord, high in birth and fortune, are a spectator from the summit of a high tower, on a high hill: the consequence of which is, that you can see nothing beautiful below you; at least nothing but with diminished beauty, and what you cannot see, you naturally disregard. Hence it is, that the word *despise* signifieth, in the original, to look down upon things from above. And it is certain that in that situation, you equally look over, (that is overlook) the tops of the highest oaks, and humblest underwood: and the beauty, dignity, and magnificence of the former, are as much hid from your eye as if they did not exist.

Yours, my Lord, is what the painters call, a *bird's-eye prospect*; which though it takes in a larger scene, can take little or no notice of the several distinguished beauties of the particular parts. Whereas I, my Lord, am an humble cottager, (and consequently a spectator) at the foot of the
hill

hill, to whom the whole prospect is open; and therefore, I am enabled to contemplate the whole scene rising up above me, in its full (though limited) extent; with all its varieties of glades, woods, and wilds, and underwoods. The towering oak rises full and straight, and stately to my view: and I with ease, discern its comparative beauty, and dignity, with all the other vegetables, that surround and attend it. Together with their various colourings and proportions. Nay, even where the plantations are thin, and the scene barren, my eye is delighted with their comparative tenuity. And even the humble heath, and flowering furzes, entertain me with an agreeable and instructive variety.

Learn hence, ye high and great, the blessings and advantages of an humble station! and learn thence to make a just, that is, an humble estimate of the pride and value of your own. Your prospects
will

will be more enlarged and extensive: but ours (if you do not carefully correct the delusions of your height) will be more exact, and sometimes more entertaining.

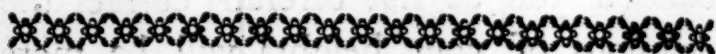
And yet, when I have said this, I dare own that I sincerely wish yours may always enlarge and improve upon you, world without end----

I am,

My LORD, &c.

S

L E T



L E T T E R XIX.

MY LORD,

HAVING shewn the preceding Letters to a friend, whose judgment I honour, and whose integrity I relied upon; it was found adviseable, to make a review of SWIFT'S character; and bring the several parts of it into a narrower compass, that it may be seen more compleatly and connectedly.

It hath been observed by wise men, that the first step we take, upon our entrance into the world, generally speaking, determines all the rest. And if it happen to be a false one, is very rarely recovered.

SWIFT is the only man I ever knew, whoever fully recovered the disgrace of
taking

taking a degree, as he took his. And yet this disgrace was to him, like the crisis of a dangerous disease, which sometimes throws off the evil humours that infested the body; by which means, the patient recovers a much better constitution than he had before.

Had SWIFT's been only an ordinary degree of ignorance, it might have been paliated and pardoned, even by himself. But being so conspicuous, it carried with it a reproach which required his best abilities and industry to recover: but being recovered, made him a new man.

He was in his nature turned to frugality, and good oeconomy. This naturally prepared, and early inclined him to some degree of avarice. And as it is the truest point of human wisdom, with regard to the conduct of our lives, to watch over our infirmities, SWIFT became early sensible of his, and took every method he could devise, to cheat his avarice,

by charity to the poor, and pensions to his nearest relations. By this means, he turned one of the most dangerous of human infirmities, into one of the most amiable of christian virtues; with all that mastery of geníus, which we hear of, in great architects, and painters, who have sometimes turned blemishes into beauties.

His charity fell under that character, which he himself ascribes to that of the Countess of *Berkley*, in the introduction to his project for the advancement of religion. *Endless bounty to the poor, and discretion where to distribute it.*

Discretion is in truth too cold and poor a word, whereby to express his great attention, and very uncommon penetration, in the distribution of his charities. His badging of the poor, and street-walking, have already been spoken of pretty much at large. But one circumstance of his walking, hath not been so fully

fully cleared. He walked to find out, and to relieve proper objects of charity; and to save wherewithal to do it. To relieve the poor in unfortunate and unavoidable distress; and to rail at such as were lazy and vicious. Here he literally followed the example of his blessed Saviour, and *went about doing good*. An example conscientiously followed by some of his friends. And, which, if it could become general, would effectually rid the world, and his own country in particular, of one of the greatest pests that ever cursed the earth! I mean vagrant and vicious beggary, with all its attendant abominations,

My Lord, the charge of SWIFT'S delighting in low adulation, has lain so heavy upon my mind, that I have revolved it with the utmost attention for many hours; yet can find no just foundation for it. His heart was so thoroughly averse from flattery, that he took all occasions, not only to express his utter contempt

and detestation of it, but also to dissuade others from it; as may be seen in his poem to Doctor DELANY, upon the libels written against him.

*Wit, as the chief of virtue's friends,
Disdains to serve ignoble ends! &c.*

and concludes that topick, by warning him of the consequences, if he did not employ his abilities as he ought.

*If not however seated high,
Your genius in your face will fly.*

And I cannot help thinking, that it was in a great measure, from his detestation of flattery, that he made even his praise as like abuse as he could possibly make it. His praise as like abuse, and his highest affection and esteem, as like envy, hatred, and malice, as he could possibly draw them.

Three (indeed upon recollection five) remarkable instances of this we find put together in the verses on the death of Doctor SWIFT.

In

*In POPE, I cannot read a line,
But, with a sigh, I wish it mine :
When he can in one couplet fix,
More sense than I can do in six :
It gives me such a jealous fit,
I cry, pox take him, and his wit.*

*Why must I be outdone by GAY,
In my own hum'rous biting way.*

*ARBUTHNOT is no more my friend,
Who dares to irony pretend ;
Which I was born to introduce,
Refin'd it first, and shew'd its use.*

* St. JOHN, as well as † PULTNEY
knows,

*That I had some repute for prose,
And till they drove me out of date,
Could maul a minister of state :
If they have mortify'd my pride,
And made me throw my pen aside,*

* Lord Viscount BOLINGBROKE.

† Made Earl of BATH in the year 1742.

*If with such talents heav'n hath blest 'em,
Have I not reason to detest 'em?*

*To all my foes dear fortune send
Thy gifts, but never to my friend:
I tamely can endure the first,
But this with envy makes me burst.*

How it might have been with him in the decline of his understanding, when he made hasty approaches to a second childhood, I cannot say. He might then, possibly, have been fed by those about him, as children too often are, with plumbs and sweet-meats, instead of salutary food.

We are both agreed to acquit him of envy. But ascribe his freedom from it to different causes.

Pray, my Lord, why might it not be placed to the account of another cause, not mentioned by either of us? contentment, with the portion of abilities, appointed

pointed to him by providence. And, I believe, we are both agreed, he had wherewithal to be reasonably and fully contented upon that head; especially as intellectual blessings are those in which most men think their own portion exceeds their neighbours. And yet they are, at the same time, the blessings in which the avarice of endless acquisitions seems most pardonable; and the envy of rivals in fame, least so. Because, if I make my rival my friend by good offices, I share in his acquisitions as well as my own. There is a community in friendship, and a true friend is allowed to be a second self.

This seems to have been SWIFT'S principle: for it is evident, that he always lived with, and loved the people of talents most congenial to his own. And went so far as to consider their merits, in the light of a kind of property of his own.

It

It clearly appears from one of his own Letters, quoted by your Lordship, that he considered his friends as a bank, from which, though he never touched the principal, yet he received annual interest.

The truth is, he loved merit of every kind, cultivated, distinguished, and did it all the honour he could, wherever he found it.

Ambition it must be owned, he had: but it was always directed to public and unselfish ends. And he managed it so, that this infirmity (if it may be called one) as that of avarice, was in him productive of good.

He often owned, that he once had an ambition to excel in his profession, as a preacher. And his penitence, that he had not attained to that excellence (for he never mentioned it without a sigh) may, I think, be justly numbered among the rectitudes, and good dispositions of his heart.

His

His project for the advancement of religion, plainly proves that he once had no less an ambition, than that of reforming the whole realm of *England*.

I seem to make it a doubt in a preceding paragraph, whether this might be called an infirmity. I am now clear that it ought not: but that it is in truth, a noble instinct inspired into the human breast for noble purposes; and when applied to its true end, the highest honour of virtue.

The only low ambition he ever could be charged with (that I know of) was that which dictated the motto to his arms, *Cum magnis vixisse*. With regard to every thing else that was praiseworthy, I perfectly agree with your Lordship. That *his pride, his spirit, or his ambition, call it by what name you please, was boundless*.

Having mentioned SWIFT's project for the advancement of religion, give me

me leave to assure you, that I never found myself more at a loss than I am at this minute how to express, not only my highest approbation, but also my highest esteem and praise of that work. The genuine offspring of a heart impressed with a most serious love and concern for the true interest of true religion and virtue.

By true religion, your Lordship will easily apprehend, that I can mean none but the christian. And it is plain that SWIFT also could mean no other, when he shews, his great concern for the doctrine of the trinity, the divinity of Christ, and the immortality of the soul: so licentiously insulted at that time, and from that time to this.

His great scheme in that project is to make the profession of true piety, and the practise of virtue, the only means of preferment, and honour, at court; and his arguments for doing so, are many,
noble

noble, and unanswerable ; let me be allowed to mention one.

“ If things were once in this train,
 “ that is, if virtue and religion were
 “ established as the necessary titles to re-
 “ putation and preferment, and if vice
 “ and infidelity were not only loaden
 “ with infamy, but made the infallible
 “ ruin of all mens pretensions ; our duty,
 “ by becoming our interest, would take
 “ root in our natures, and mix with
 “ the very genius of our people ; so that
 “ it would not be easy for the example
 “ of one wicked Prince to bring us back
 “ to our former corruptions.”

To me, my Lord, the style of this paragraph, and indeed of the whole project, is as distinguished as the piety and good sense that reigns throughout.

One thing relating to this project for the advancement of religion, is too remarkably for SWIFT's honour to be omitted in these observations ; it is this.

The

The bitter rebuke with which he lashes the irreligious, and scandalous negligence of the *English* nation, in not providing fit places for the people, wherein to attend the public worship of God; roused the *English* Bishops from the lethargy by which they seemed to be stupified upon that head; and set them upon searching out for a fund for building fifty new Churches in *London*; which was done accordingly.

If this may not be strictly considered as matter of uncommon merit in SWIFT, it must at least be allowed, an event of high honour, and inconceivable felicity to him.

All these circumstances, and characters of his piety, rightly considered, make it matter of amazement, how Archbishop SHARP could be so imposed upon, as to represent him to the QUEEN under the character of an unchristian man. It
willy

will, however, be some satisfaction to the reader, as I doubt not it was to SWIFT (though no reparation of the injury) to know that the Archbishop lived to repent of this injury done to SWIFT, expressed great sorrow for it, and desired his forgiveness.

Your Lordship hath made so many and such judicious observations upon the excellency of SWIFT's style, that little, I think, can be added to them. That little, however, will I hope not be deemed altogether unworthy your attention.

His own definition of a good style was this, *Proper words in proper places.*

To profit by this definition, two things must be carefully examined, and attended to.

The first is carefully to consider the power, and propriety of words. And the next, the strength and harmony arising from

from their arrangement, and connexion with one another.

Both these after long study and practice were become such a habit in SWIFT, that it cost him little pains, or attention, to display them in his composition; and yet, after all, that which gave his style its true and best distinction was the clearness and perspicuity arising from that conciseness in his style, which gives obscurity to almost every other; and which you therefore most properly call a masterly conciseness. I can compare it to nothing so properly, as to that character of a right line, which as it is the plainest, simplest, and easiest to be comprehended by the eye, is, at the same time, the shortest that can be drawn between any two points.

Let me illustrate this by two short examples from the project for the advancement, &c. Speaking of the *Queen's* (QUEEN ANNE) several virtues he adds,
where-

wherein without question or flattery, she hath no superior.

And again---- how would it brighten her character to the present and after ages if she would exert her utmost authority to instill some share of those virtues into her people, which they are too degenerate to learn, only from her example.

The man that attempts, either to contract these paragraphs or make them clearer, or more correct; will quickly subscribe to your judgment of SWIFT's style.

As his style was evidently formed upon the plan of the best latin writers, I cannot tell how to account for its being any way defective in his writing latin, as your lordship charges it to be. And I must frankly own, that in my judgment, his monumental inscription to the memory of Duke Schomberg (or rather to the reproach of his heirs) will ever remain a just exception to your censure.

T

I

I appeal to the world, and to the inscription; and to SWIFT's account of it, which is as follows.

An epitaph by Doctor SWIFT to the memory of FREDERICK Duke of *Schomberg*, who was unhappily killed in crossing the river *Boyne*, on the 1st of July 1690, and was buried in St. PATRICK's Cathedral; where the Dean and chapter erected a small monument to his honour at their own expence.

Hic infra situm est corpus FREDERICE
DUCIS

De Schomberg

ad Bubindam occisi, A. D. 1690.

DECANUS, et CAPITULUM maximopere
etiam

atque etiam petierunt,

Ut HEREDES DUCIS monumentum

In memoriam PARENTIS erigendum curarent

Sed postquam per epistolas, per amicos,
diu ac sæpe orando, nil profecere;

Hunc

Hunc demum lapidem ipsi statuerunt,

* *Saltem ut scias, hospes,*

*Ubinam terrarum SCHONBERGENSIS cineres
delitefcunt.*

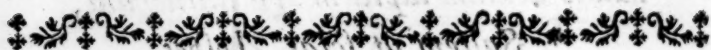
Plus potuit fama virtutis apud alienos

Quam sanguinis proximitas apud fuos.

A. D. 1731.

I fhall only add, that the author of this Letter had the felicity to prevail upon the Dean to leave out that fentence mentioned in this note, with fome other fatiric feverities.

* The words that Doctor SWIFT firft concluded the epitaph with were ftill ftronger; namely, *Saltem ut fcias viator indignabundus, quali in cellula tanti du&toris cineres delitefcunt.* For the author was always heard to fpeak with great reverence of the memory of that brave Duke; as well as his glorious Mafter, King WILLIAM: and indeed of all others, who have ftruggled for the liberties of thefe kingdoms againft the repeated attempts of arbitrary power.



L E T T E R XX.

MY LORD,

I Have already said so much upon SWIFT's project for the advancement of religion, that I heartily wish (as much as the reader may) that I had nothing more to say about it. And yet the character I have taken upon me, of a candid observer upon your Remarks on his Life and Writings, will not suffer me to give it entirely over, without taking some notice of your Remarks, p. 96. which I am satisfied all SWIFT's friends would consider as a most severe censure, even from the pen of an enemy.

You tell us, *That he appears in earnest throughout the whole treatise; but as the pamphlet is of the satirical kind, I am apt to imagine that my friend, the Dean, put a violence*

violence upon himself, in chusing to appear candidly serious; rather than to laugh silently under his usual masque of gravity.---And you add, your reason. For, methinks, upon these occasions, I perceive him writing in shackles.

My Lord, I don't pretend to the penetration of many others, I thank God I have it not.

*Di bene fecerunt inopis me quodque pusilli
Finxerunt animi---*

*On me a simple unsuspecting mind
The gods bestow'd, I thank them, they
were kind.*

I assure you, my Lord, that if I had had the honour of being concerned in forming the character, and ensigns of the goddess of wisdom among the ancients; the basilisk should not have been in the number of her emblems. I should have been contented to have furnished her with eyes that could pierce without poisoning.

To deal candidly with you, my Lord, I imagine you have lately been conversant with some four criticks, whose satiric sagacity would warp you from your good-nature.

My Lord, your eyes are too good to need the aid of critick-spectacles: which, at the same time that they sharpen the sight, too often impair the organs.

It must be owned, that SWIFT hath written as seriously upon other subjects as any other man. Is religion then the only serious subject on which he only seems to be serious? if this be not charging him with the worst kind of that hypocrisy which he detested above all other vices in the world (which I will not believe could be your intention) yet it is something so very like it, that few eyes will, I fear, be sharp-sighted enough to distinguish them.

Besides,

Besides, my Lord, with great submission, this discourse is not properly of the satirical kind. It is calculated for much higher, and nobler ends; the reformation of a great court, and nation! from the most serious, rational, and christian motives. And it is certain that scarce any writing can be calculated for the amendment of mankind, without some mixture, or at least, some appearance of satire upon their vices.

My Lord, I know nothing more dangerous than indulging surmises to any man's disadvantage; which are not founded upon sufficient evidence.

You, my Lord, take occasion from SWIFT's sermon upon the Trinity, to enveigh against the practice of placing eternal damnation before the eyes of mankind, in discourses upon abstruse points of religion. Could I reasonably infer from thence, that you were for lessening the sanctions intended to secure

obedience to the Christian precepts? God forbid. My Lord, you well know the sanctions cannot be too strong, or too well guarded; since strong as they are, they are yet found insufficient. And it is evident that if they were less awful, and important, they would be altogether insignificant. And yet, my Lord, such a surmise in me, tho' by no means sufficiently grounded, would, with great submission, be much more justifiable than yours of SWIFT's in the point before us.

My Lord, I fully purposed to have concluded my remarks on SWIFT's project for the advancement of religion, with my last observation upon your criticism now mentioned; but being obliged to revise that treatise with care, in order to be fully satisfied, that my observations on that point were just, I found I had omitted one of the finest observations in the whole work. And one of the noblest motives that could be urged to a court, to engage them in the execution of his scheme.

After

After he hath reasoned upon the high duty and great importance of executing the laws against immorality, and irreligion, he adds as follows.

“ Nor could the majesty of the *English*
 “ crown appear, upon any occasion, in
 “ a greater lustre, either to foreigners or
 “ subjects, than by an administration,
 “ which producing such good effects,
 “ would discover so much power. And
 “ power being the natural appetite of
 “ princes; a limited monarch cannot so
 “ well gratify it in any point, as a strict
 “ execution of the laws.”

How amiable and admirable would that prince be, who governed himself and his people by this principle, and steadily pursued this plan! the only danger would be, that by doing so he would quickly become so much loved, and honoured by his people, as easily to arise to an absolute power over their wills and affec-

affections: which might be devolved upon successors less deserving.

SWIFT hints upon the usefulness of another institution in that project, the establishing of a cenfor here, as anciently at *Rome*. An employment to which (if it took place) he himself, of all mankind, should be first raised.

What he might do in such an employment, will best be estimated by what he did without it. And it is certain, that he kept the whole kingdom of *Ireland*, in a great measure, in awe of him. By which I am well satisfied, many wicked jobs were prevented, which had otherwise been perpetrated, without shame or fear. And many more would have been prevented, were he admitted a member of several public boards, where his talents and his authority could be fully exerted to their true ends. But, I fear it is but too true, that he was (as I have been well assured) excluded from them, for that very reason.

He

He was to the Bashaws, and petty Tyrants of *Ireland*, what PETER ARRETINE is said to have been to the greatest princes of *Europe* in his time, a watchful centinel, and strong check upon their faults and follies.

The great difference would be, that it were impossible to keep SWIFT from publishing and branding their vanities and villanies to the world: as ARRETINE often was.

His attention to the interest of his successors in the Deanery of St. PATRICK'S, and in his parish of *Laracor* (both founded upon his concern for the true interest of religion) appear very clearly, and fully, from his last will; and are indeed very remarkable.

His garden called the Vineyard, near the Deanery House, he directs should be sold: yet plainly hints, that it was his
in-

intention and desire that it should always be continued in the hands of the succeeding Deans. Each Dean lessening one fourth part of the purchase to each succeeding Dean, and paying no more than the present Rent. And whereas his improvement there had cost him six hundred pounds, it was manifestly his wish that his successors might have the benefit of them for three hundred.

To his successors the Vicars of *Lad-racor*, for the time being, he bequeathes the tythes of the parish of *Effernock* (which cost him two hundred and sixty pounds) as long as the present episcopal religion shall continue established in that kingdom; but after that ceases, to the poor of the said parish, while christianity is tolerated among us under any shape; still excepting professed jews, atheists, and infidels.

This article needs no comment or commendation.

Al-

Although he did not continue long at *Laracor*, he improved the house, and cultivated the little scene and glebe about it, as far as it should be improved to make it a proper receptacle for his successors: although no return of that expence could accrue to his executors on that account; no law being then made for the encouragement of such improvements.

The garden he made very pretty: enlarged the current, and smoothed the banks of a small stream that bounded it; where he had, what he called, his *Margine ripæ*, that is a pretty walk winding with the water: from whence I apprehend he copied that part of his wish in his imitation of HORACE, Lib. 2. Sat. 6.

A handsome house to lodge a friend:

A river at my garden's end;

A

*A terrass-walk, and half a rood
Of land, set out to plant a wood.*

The mention of this half rood puts me in mind of a remarkable incident which befel SWIFT.

He planted a piece of ground of about that size (about half a rood) near his house, with very fine elms, where they continued to flourish for many years; till the proprietor of the ground (for unhappily it proved no part of SWIFT's glebe) found it for his conveniency to remove them, which he did accordingly; to SWIFT's unspeakable mortification.

Had the present honourable owner of the ground been then in possession of it, I am strongly persuaded that SWIFT would have found kinder treatment at his hands.

But to bring back this desultory narration to something more interesting in the conduct and character of SWIFT.

His

His most obnoxious quality, at least that which most exposed him to censure, was his utter neglect of those appearances of religion, which he often suspected in others, and apprehended might be suspected in himself, of hypocrisy.

Here it must be owned, he was too unguarded ; not sufficiently considering that it was much worse to be suspected of infidelity than hypocrisy ; and that the ministers of Christ should be much less suspected in that point than the wife of CÆSAR.

This wrong judgment exposed him to all the censure he underwent on the score both of Mrs. JOHNSTON, and VAN-ESSA ; of which I have already said perhaps more than enough ; yet I cannot forbear adding, that the conclusion of his conduct towards the former, was as singularly remarkable as any other part to it.

He

He suffered her to dispose entirely of her own fortune at her death, and by her own name; and that to a most public and christian charity. Perhaps upon this principle, that as she had gained no honour by being his wife, he thought it but justice that she should lose no property or merit of charity by it.

To sum up all---he lived long an honour to the powers of the human mind: and died (as he had lived for some few later years) a sad monument of the infirmities incident to it in this house of clay: and a melancholly mortifying memento to the vanity of the pride of parts. His little power and fortune, whilst he enjoyed them, were in miniature, a resemblance of that great tree which shadowed out the grandeur, might, magnificence and munificence of NEBUCHADNEZZAR: it protected, as far as it could, all those that resorted to it for shade and shelter: and supported those that fled to it, for relief and suste-

sustenance; and this was cut down as that was, when God *had purposed to stain the pride of all glory.*

My Lord, when you consider SWIFT's singular, peculiar, and most variegated vein of wit, always rightly intended (although not always so rightly directed) delightful in many instances, and salutary, even where it is most offensive; when you consider his strict truth, his fortitude in resisting oppression, and arbitrary power; his fidelity in friendship; his sincere love and zeal for religion; his uprightness in making right resolutions, and his steadiness in adhering to them: his care of his church, its choir, its œconomy, and its income: his attention to all those that preached in his cathedral, in order to their amendment in pronunciation and style; as also his remarkable attention to the interest of his successors, preferably to his own present emoluments; his invincible patriotism, even to a country which he did not love; his very various, well devised, well

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judged, and extensive charities, throughout his life ; and his whole fortune (to say nothing of his wife's) conveyed to the same christian purposes at his death: charities from which he could enjoy no honour, advantage, or satisfaction of any kind, in this world.

When you consider his ironical and humorous, as well as his serious schemes for the promotion of true religion and virtue ; his success in soliciting for the first fruits and twentieths, to the unspeakable benefit of the established church of *Ireland* ; and his felicity (to rate it no higher) in giving occasion to the building of fifty new churches in *London*.

All this considered, the character of his life will appear like that of his writings ; they will both bear to be re-considered and re-examined with the utmost attention ; and will always discover new beauties and excellencies, upon every examination.

They

They will bear to be considered as the sun, in which the brightness will hide the blemishes; and whenever petulant ignorance, pride, malice, malignity, or envy interposes, to cloud, or sully his fame, I will take upon me to pronounce, that the eclipse will not last long.

To conclude,----no man ever deserved better of any country than SWIFT did of his. A steady, persevering, inflexible friend; a wise, a watchful, and a faithful counsellor under many severe trials, and bitter persecutions, to the manifest hazard, both of his liberty and fortune !

He lived a blessing, he died a benefactor, and his name will ever live an honour to *Ireland*.



T W O
O R I G I N A L P I E C E S

B Y

Dr. S W I F T.

V I Z.

A T R E A T I S E *on* Good-Manners *and*
Good-Breeding:

A N D,

V E R S E S *to a friend who had been much abused*
in many inveterate Libels.



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ON

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

LIBRARY

ORIGINAL RECORDS

OF THE

DAVID W. BROWN

AND

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

AND

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

AND

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

AND

ON



ON
GOOD-MANNERS
AND
GOOD-BREEDING.

GOOD-Manners is the Art of making those people easy with whom we converse.

Whoever makes the fewest persons uneasy is the best bred in the company.

As the best law is founded upon reason, so are the best manners. And as some lawyers have introduced unreasonable things into common law; so likewise many teachers have introduced absurd things into common good-manners.

One principal point of this art is to suit our behaviour to the three several degrees of men; our superiors, our equals, and those below us.

For instance, to press either of the two former to eat or drink is a breach of manners; but a farmer or a tradesman must be thus treated, or else it will be difficult to persuade them that they are welcome.

Pride, ill-nature, and want of sense, are the three great sources of ill-manners; without some one of these defects, no man will behave himself ill for want of experience; or of what, in the language of fools, is called, knowing the world.

I defy any one to assign an incident wherein reason will not direct us what we are to say or to do in company, if we are not misled by pride or ill-nature.

There-

Therefore I insist that good sense is the principal foundation of good manners : but because the former is a gift which very few among mankind are possessed of, therefore all the civilized nations of the world have agreed upon fixing some rules for common behaviour, best suited to their general customs, or fancies, as a kind of artificial good sense to supply the defects of reason. Without which, the *gentlemenly* part of dunces would be perpetually at cuffs, as they seldom fail when they happen to be drunk, or engaged in squabbles about women, or play. And, God be thanked, there hardly happens a duel in a year, which may not be imputed to one of those three motives. Upon which account, I should be exceedingly sorry to find the legislature make any new laws against the practice of duelling; because the methods are easy, and many, for a wise man to avoid a quarrel with honour, or engage in it with

with innocence. And I can discover no political evil in suffering bullies, sharpers, and rakes, to rid the world of each other by a method of their own; where the law hath not been able to find an expedient.

As the common forms of good-manners were intended for regulating the conduct of those who have weak understandings; so they have been corrupted by the persons for whose use they were contrived. For these people have fallen into a needless and endless way of multiplying ceremonies, which have been extremely troublesom to those who practise them; and insupportable to every body else: insomuch that wise men are often more uneasy at the over civility of these refiners, than they could possibly be in the conversations, of peasants or mechanicks.

The impertinencies of this ceremonial behaviour are no where better seen than
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at those tables, where ladies preside; who value themselves upon account of their good-breeding; where a man must reckon upon passing an hour without doing any one thing he has a mind to; unless he will be so hardy to break thorough all the settled decorum of the family. She determines what he loves best, and how much he shall eat; and if the master of the house happens to be of the same disposition, he proceeds in the same tyrannical manner to prescribe in the drinking part: at the same time, you are under the necessity of answering a thousand apologies for your entertainment. And although a good deal of this humour is pretty well worn off among many people of the best fashion, yet too much of it still remains, especially in the Country. Where an honest gentleman assured me, that having been kept four days, against his will, at a friend's house, with all the circumstances of hiding his boots, locking
up

up the stable, and other contrivances of the like nature; he could not remember from the moment he came into the house, to the moment he left it, any one thing, wherein his inclination was not directly contradicted: as if the whole family had entered into a combination to torment him.

But besides all this, it would be endless to recount the many foolish and ridiculous accidents I have observed among these unfortunate profelytes to ceremony. I have seen a dutchess fairly knock'd down by the precipitancy of an officious coxcomb, running to save her the trouble of opening a door. I remember, upon a birth-day, at court, a great Lady was utterly desperate by a dish of sauce let fall by a page directly upon her head-dress, and brocade; while she gave a sudden turn to her elbow upon some point of ceremony with the person who sat next her. Monsieur Buys, the *Dutch*
En-

Envoy, whose politicks and manners were much of a size, brought a son with him, about thirteen years old, to a great table at court. The boy, and his father, whatever they put on their plates, they first offered round in order, to every person in the company; so that we could not get a minute's quiet during the whole dinner. At last, their two plates happened to encounter, and with so much violence, that being china, they broke in twenty pieces; and stained half the company with wet sweet meats and cream.

There is a pedantry in manners, as in all arts and sciences; and sometimes in trades. Pedantry is properly the overrating any kind of knowledge we pretend to. And if that kind of knowledge be a trifle in itself, the pedantry is the greater. For which reason, I look upon fiddlers, dancing-masters, heralds, masters of the ceremony, &c. to
be

be greater pedants, than LIPSIUS, or the elder SCALIGER. With these kind of pedants, the court, while I knew it, was always plentifully stocked: I mean from the gentleman-usher (at least) inclusive, downward to the gentleman-porter: who are generally speaking, the most insignificant race of people, that this island can afford, and with the smallest tincture of good-manners; which is the only trade they profess. For being wholly illiterate, and conversing chiefly with each other, they reduce the whole system of breeding within the forms and circles of their several offices: and as they are below the notice of ministers, they live and die in court under all revolutions, with great obsequiousness to those who are in any degree of favour or credit: and with rudeness or insolence to every body else. From whence I have long concluded, that good-manners are not a plant of the court growth: for if they were, those people who have understand-
ings

ings directly of a level for such acquirements, and who have served such long apprenticeships to nothing else, would certainly have picked them up. For as to the great officers who attend the prince's person or councils, or preside in his family, they are a transient body, who have no better a title to good-manners, than their neighbours, nor will probably have recourse to gentlemen-ushers for instruction. So that I know little to be learnt at court upon this head, except in the material circumstance of dress; wherein the authority of the maids of honour must indeed be allowed, to be almost equal to that of a favourite actress.

I remember a passage my Lord BOLINGBROKE told me, that going to receive Prince EUGENE of *Savoy* at his landing, in order to conduct him immediately to the Queen; the Prince said, he was much concerned that he could not
see

see her Majesty that night ; for Monsieur HOFTMAN (who was then by) had assured his highness, that he could not be admitted into her presence with a tied-up periwig : that his equipage was not arrived, and that he had endeavoured in vain to borrow a long one among all his valets and pages. My Lord turned the matter to a jest, and brought the Prince to her Majesty : for which he was highly censured by the whole tribe of gentlemen-ushers : among whom Monsieur HOFTMAN, an old dull resident of the Emperor's, had picked up this material point of ceremony ; and which, I believe, was the best lesson he had learned in five and twenty years residence.

I make a difference between good-manners, and good-breeding ; although in order to vary my expression, I am sometimes forced to confound them. By the first, I only understand the art of remembering, and applying certain
settled

settled forms of general behaviour. But good-breeding is of a much larger extent; for besides an uncommon degree of literature sufficient to qualify a gentleman for reading a play, or a political pamphlet, it takes in a great compass of knowledge; no less than that of dancing, fighting, gameing making the circle of *Italy*, riding the great horse, and speaking *French*; not to mention some other secondary, or subaltern accomplishments, which are more easily acquired: so that the difference between good-breeding, and good-manners, lies in this; that the former cannot be attained to by the best understandings, without study and labour: whereas a tolerable degree of reason will instruct us in every part of good-manners, without other assistance.

I can think of nothing more useful upon this subject, than to point out some particulars, wherein the very essentials of good-manners are concerned, the neg-

left or perverting of which, doth very much disturb the good commerce of the world; by introducing a traffic of mutual uneasiness in most companies.

First, a necessary part of good-manners, is a punctual observance of time at our own dwellings, or those of others, or at third places; whether upon matter of civility, business, or diversion; which rule, tho' it be a plain dictate of common reason, yet the greatest minister I ever knew, was the greatest trespasser against it; by which all his business doubled upon him, and placed him in a continual arrear. Upon which I often used to rally him, as deficient in point of good-manners. I have known more than one ambassador, and secretary of state, with a very moderate portion of intellectuals, execute their offices with good success and applause by the mere force of exactness, and regularity. If you duly observe time for the service of another, it doubles the obli-

obligation; if upon your own account, it would be manifest folly, as well as ingratitude, to neglect it. If both are concerned, to make your equal or inferior attend on you, to his own disadvantage, is pride and injustice.

Ignorance of forms cannot properly be stiled ill-manners; because forms are subject to frequent changes; and consequently, being not founded upon reason, are beneath a wise man's regard. Besides, they vary in every country; and after a short period of time, very frequently in the same. So that a man who travels must needs be at first a stranger to them in every court, through which he passes. And perhaps at his return, as much a stranger in his own; and after all, they are easier to be remembered, or forgotten, than faces, or names.

Indeed among the many impertinencies
that superficial young men bring with
X 2 them

them from abroad, this bigotry of forms is one of the principal, and more prominent than the rest. Who look upon them, not only as if they were matters capable of admitting of choice, but even as points of importance, and therefore zealous upon all occasions to introduce, and propagate the new forms and fashions they have brought back with them. So that usually speaking, the worst bred person in the company, is a young traveller just returned from abroad.



*To a Friend who had been much
abused in many inveterate Libels.*

THE greatest monarch may be
stab'd by night,
And fortune help the murd'rer in his
flight;
The vilest Russian may commit a rape,
Yet safe from injured innocence
escape:
And calumny, by working under ground,
Can, unreveng'd, the greatest merit
wound.

What's to be done? shall wit and
learning chuse,
To live obscure, and have no fame
to lose?

By

By censure frighted out of honour's
road,

Nor dare to use the gifts by heav'n
bestow'd;

Or fearless enter in thro' virtue's gate,

And buy distinction at the dearest rate.

F I N I S.